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NEW ENGLAND TALE,

AND

MISCELLANIES.

BY

orig
CATHERINE M. SEDGEWICK,

AUTHOR OF "HOPE LESLIE," "REDWOOD," "CLARENCE," ETC., ETC.



NEW-YORK:

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A

## NEW ENGLAND TALE.

But how the subject theme may gang,  
Let time and chance determine;  
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,  
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

BURNS.



# NEW ENGLAND TALES.

THE NEW ENGLAND TALES  
BY  
JOHN RUSSELL  
NEW YORK  
1854



TO  
MARIA EDGEWORTH,  
AS A  
SLIGHT EXPRESSION  
OF THE  
WRITER'S SENSE OF HER EMINENT SERVICES  
IN THE  
GREAT CAUSE  
OF  
HUMAN VIRTUE AND IMPROVEMENT,

*This Humble Tale*

IS  
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

TO MARIA EDGEWORTH

AS A

WELCOMING EXPRESSION

OF THE

WRITER'S SENSE OF HER EXISTENT SERVICES

IN THE

GREAT CAUSE

OF

HUMAN LIBERTY AND IMPROVEMENT

THE PUBLISHER

OF

REPRESENTATIVE MEMOIRS



# PREFACE

## TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE writer of this tale has made an humble effort to add something to the scanty stock of native American literature. Any attempt to conciliate favour by apologies would be unavailing and absurd. In this free country, no person is under any obligation to write; and the public (unfortunately) is under no obligation to read. (It is certainly desirable to possess some sketches of the character and manners of our own country, and if this has been done with any degree of success, it would be wrong to doubt that it will find a reception sufficiently favourable.)

The original design of the author was, if possible, even more limited and less ambitious than what has been accomplished. It was simply to produce a very



short and simple moral tale of the most humble description; and if in the course of its production it has acquired any thing of a peculiar or local cast, this should be chiefly attributed to the habits of the writer's education, and that kind of accident which seems to control the efforts of those who have not been the subjects of strict intellectual discipline, and have not sufficiently premeditated their own designs.

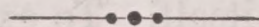
It can scarcely be necessary to assure the reader, that no personal allusions, however remote, were intended to be made to any individual, unless it be an exception to this remark, that the writer has attempted a sketch of a real character under the fictitious appellation of "Crazy Bet."

*March 30, 1822.*



## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND EDITION.



THERE are few subjects upon which men are so apt to mistake, as their motives, and the character of their own actions. This tale was written under a sincere conviction of its beneficial tendency. If this be a delusion, it is one which still influences the mind of the writer, who cannot but believe that it is this circumstance which has chiefly contributed to the satisfaction derived from the indulgent and liberal reception with which this humble effort has been so kindly greeted.

The objections which have been made to the moral and religious character of this book, the writer cannot comprehend, and therefore will not undertake to refute. Religious cant and sanctimonious pretence have existed in most ages of the world, and have ever been deemed legitimate objects of satire; and the writer of the New England Tale, would rather court than avoid



an imputation (if it be such), which must be equally shared with Butler, Cowper, and Crabbe, and could only wish that there had been a similar participation of talent and genius.

If the writer could suppose that any reader of intelligence and candour could consider this tale as a designed attack upon the character of any class of Christians, such an object would be distinctly disavowed; and, it is confidently believed, might be clearly refuted from the tale itself. To exhibit our religion in its uncorrupted state, and in such a form as to interest the affections and influence the conduct, is a right and a duty which the writer has attempted to exercise and perform; and if any degree of success has attended that effort, it must bring with it its own reward. In the mode of doing this, mistakes may have been committed, and, if so, will be matter of sincere regret.

Every person of generous sentiments who has been led to treat of morals or religion, must have felt with peculiar force the sentiment so beautifully expressed in the often quoted lines of the master-poet of our language:

“Oh then that we could come by Cæsar’s spirit,  
And not dismember Cæsar!”

But, from the constitution of human nature, it is, and ever will be, impossible to make any attack upon



folly, vice, or error, which shall not be susceptible of an application to classes of men, and even to individuals; and if any one shall insist upon making such an application of any thing in this book, the writer must reply to the supposed antagonist in the words of the same poet—that he

—————“but therein suits

His folly to the metal of my speech.

—————Let me see wherein

My tongue has wronged him; if it do him right,

Then hath he wronged himself; if he be free,

Why then my censure like a wild goose flies,

Unclaimed of any man.”

But there is a charge of a graver cast which may be fairly made against this book, and to which the writer seizes with avidity the first opportunity to plead guilty. If, as its title must seem to denote, the book be considered as a representation of the general character of the people of New England, it is not sufficiently favourable. In that character no one feels a deeper interest or a higher pride than the writer, who thinks that there is to be found in it, if not so much to adorn human life, yet perhaps even more than is fitted to subserve the great interests of mankind, than in any other portion of the world. If this sentiment be deemed narrow or prejudiced, it must be put to the account



of early education, and that ground will meet with indulgence. With such an opinion, however, can it be supposed that the writer could consent to publish a libel upon the whole people?

As a mistake has been committed, the best correction may perhaps be found in an honest avowal of its cause.

It is stated in the preface to the first edition, that the book was written without any definite plan—and an intelligent reader would probably have made the same observation without the suggestion of the author. There certainly was no design either in the plan or execution of the work, of furnishing an estimate of the intellectual, moral, or religious character of the people of New-England, and when finished, its title was rather inconsiderately adopted at the suggestion of a friend.

It is not known whether there be any precedent for changing the title of a book, yet the author has thought proper, in this edition, to retrench a part of it, which is at least superfluous.

*July 18, 1822.*

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THE prefaces to the former editions of the New-England Tale are retained in this, as there may yet be those to whom their explanations will be satisfactory. The reason alleged in the first for the publication of



the book is now rendered void by the immense and rapidly increasing mass of "native American literature."

This Tale might be left to its natural death, or obscurity, overshadowed by fresher and superior productions of the same species, but that it derives some claim to sufferance from its priority in time.

Our social has kept pace with our physical development in the last few years. Society has been moulded and remoulded, cast and recast, so that the portraiture of thirty years since, though bearing no veri-similitude to the present times, has a certain value, like that of a picture, however unskilfully wrought, that preserves with truth the features and costume of a past period.

New sects have sprung up, old ones are abated or softened, and a pharisaical, canting bigot, of the old orthodoxy of New-England, like the Dame Wilson of our story, would talk an unknown tongue to a sister in the communion of the new school, albeit evangelical.

The progress of civilization, and the facilities of communication, have levelled all distinctions. There is no village so secluded now as to be surprised by the fashions of the town, and scarcely a country-bred lady to be detected by her rusticity. The progress in the luxury of dress makes the invective of our Mrs. Convers against the extravagance of the 'now-a-days girl' simply ludicrous. The country '*store*,' which perhaps



received its designation from the variety of its commodities, ranging from brooms to ribbons, has become the '*shop*,' filled, in some cases, by direct importations from England and France. No crusade could now be successfully pursued against dancing. Even the rustic phrases that characterized the position of our dramatis personæ have passed away and are forgotten.—Thus if the coin we offer be neither gold nor silver, if it have no intrinsic value, we hope its impress will be an apology for its new issue, with those who have a fond or foolish love for the past.

The additional tales in the volume will at least have the attraction of novelty to most of our readers, as they are now, for the first time, resuscitated, after a decent interment in the magazines.

*Lenox, May 27, 1852.*



A

## NEW ENGLAND TALE

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### CHAPTER I.

Oh, ye ! who sunk in beds of down,  
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,  
Think for a moment on his wretched fate,  
Whom friends and fortune quite disown.

BURNS.

MR. ELTON was formerly a flourishing trader, or, in rustic phrase, a merchant, in the village of ———. In the early part of his life he had been successful in business ; and having a due portion of that mean pride which is gratified by pecuniary superiority, he was careful to appear quite as rich as he was. When he was at the top of fortune's wheel, some of his prying neighbors shrewdly suspected, that the show of his wealth was quite out of proportion to the reality ; and their side-glances and prophetic whispers betrayed their contempt of the offensive airs of the purse-proud man.

The people in the village of ——— were simple in their habits, and economical in their modes of life ; and Mr. Elton's occasional indulgence in a showy piece of furniture, or an expensive article of dress for himself or for his wife,



attracted notice, and, we fear, sometimes provoked envy, even from those who were wiser and much better than he was. So inconsistent are men—and women too—that they often envy a display of which they really despise, and loudly condemn the motive.

Mrs. Elton neither deserved nor shared the dislike her husband received in full measure. On the contrary, she had the good-will of her neighbors. She never seemed elated by prosperity; and though she occasionally appeared in an expensive Leghorn hat, a merino shawl, or a fine lace, the gentleness and humility of her manners, and the uniform benevolence of her conduct, averted the censure that would otherwise have fallen on her. She had married Mr. Elton when very young, without much consideration, and after a short acquaintance. She had to learn, in the bitter way of experience, that there was no sympathy between them; their hands were indissolubly joined, but their hearts were not related; he was “of the earth, earthy”—she “of the heavens, heavenly.” She had that passiveness which, we believe, is exclusively a feminine virtue (if virtue it may be called), and she acquiesced silently and patiently in her unhappy fate, though there was a certain abstractedness in her manner, a secret feeling of indifference and separation from the world, of which she, perhaps, never investigated, certainly never exposed the cause.

Mr. Elton's success in business had been rather owing to accidental circumstances, than to his skill or prudence; but his vanity appropriated to himself all the merit of it. He adventured rashly in one speculation after another, and failing in them all, his losses were more rapid than his acquisitions had been. Few persons have virtue enough to retrench their expenses, as their income diminishes; and no virtue, of



difficult growth, could be expected from a character where no good seed had ever taken root.

The *morale*, like the *physique*, needs use and exercise to give it strength. Mrs. Elton's had never been thus invigorated. She could not oppose a strong current. She had not energy to avert an evil, though she would have borne patiently any that could have been laid on her. She knew her husband's affairs were embarrassed; she saw him constantly incurring debts, which she knew they had no means of paying; she perceived he was gradually sinking into a vice, which, while it lulls the sense of misery, annihilates the capacity of escaping from it—and yet she silently, and without an effort, acquiesced in his faults. They lived on, as they had lived, keeping an expensive table, and three or four servants, and dressing as usual.

This conduct in Mrs. Elton, was the result of habitual passiveness; in Mr. Elton, it was prompted by a vain hope of concealing from his neighbors a truth, that, in spite of his bustling, ostentatious ways, they had known for many months. This is a common delusion. We all know that from the habits of our people in a country town, it is utterly impossible for the most watchful and skilful manœuverer, to keep his pecuniary affairs secret from the keen and quick observation of his neighbors. The expedients practised for concealment are much like that of a little child, who shuts his own eyes, and fancies he has closed those of the spectators; or in their effect upon existing circumstances, may be compared to the action of a frightened woman, who turns her back in a carriage when the horses are leaping over a precipice.

It may seem strange, perhaps incredible, that Mrs. Elton, possessing the virtues we have attributed to her, and being a religious woman, should be accessory to such deception, and



(for we will call "things by their right names") dishonesty. But the wonder will cease if we look around upon the circle of our acquaintance, and observe how few there are among those whom we believe to be Christians, who govern their daily conduct by Christian principles, and regulate their temporal duties by the strict Christian rule. Truly, narrow is the way of perfect integrity, and few there are that walk therein.

There are too many who forget that our religion is not like that of the ancients, something set apart from the ordinary concerns of life; the consecrated, not the "daily bread;" a service for the temple and the grove, having its separate class of duties and pleasures; but is "the leaven that leaveneth the whole lump," a spirit to be infused into the common affairs of life. We fear Mrs. Elton was not quite guiltless of this fault. She believed all the Bible teaches. She had long been a member of the church in the town where she lived. She daily read the Scriptures, and daily offered sincere prayers. Certainly the waters of the fountain from whence she drank, had a salutary influence, though they failed to heal all her diseases. She was kind, gentle, and uncomplaining; and sustained, with admirable patience, the growing infirmities and irritating faults of her husband. To her child, she performed her duties wisely, and with an anxious zeal; the result, in part, of uncommon maternal tenderness, and in part, of a painful consciousness of the faults of her own character, and perhaps, of a secret feeling she had left much undone that she ought to do.

Mr. Elton, after his pecuniary embarrassments were beyond the hope of extrication, maintained by stratagem the appearance of prosperity for some months, when a violent fever ended his struggle with the tide of fortune that had set



against him, and consigned him to that place where there is "no more work nor device." His wife was left quite destitute with her child, then an interesting little girl, a little more than twelve years old. A more energetic mind than Mrs. Elton's might have been discouraged by the troubles which were now set before her in all their extent, and with tenfold aggravation; and she, irresolute, spiritless, and despondent, sunk under them. She had, from nature, a slender constitution; her health declined, and after lingering for some months, she died with resignation, but not without a heart-rending pang at the thought of leaving her child, poor, helpless, and friendless.

Little Jane had nursed her mother with fidelity and tenderness, and performed services for her, to which her years seemed hardly adequate, with an efficiency and exactness that surprised all who were prepared to find her a delicately bred and indulged child. She seemed to have inherited nothing from her father but his active mind: from her mother she had derived a pure and gentle spirit; but this would have been quite insufficient to produce the result of such a character as hers, without the aid of her mother's vigilant, and, for the most part, judicious training. In the formation of her child's character, she had been essentially aided by a faithful domestic, who had lived with her for many years, and nursed Jane in her infancy.

We know it is common to rail at our domestics. Their independence is certainly often inconvenient to their employers; but, as it is the result of the prosperous condition of all classes in our happy country, it is not right nor wise to complain of it. We believe there are many instances of intelligent and affectionate service, that are rarely equalled, where ignorance and servility mark the lower classes. Mary Hull



was endowed with a mind of uncommon strength, and an affectionate heart. These were her jewels. She had been *brought up* by a pious mother, and early and zealously embraced the faith of the Methodists. She had the virtues of her station in an eminent degree: practical good sense, industrious, efficient habits, and *handy ways*. She never presumed formally to offer her advice to Mrs. Elton; her instincts seemed to define the line of propriety to her; but she had a way of suggesting hints, of which Mrs. Elton learnt the value by experience. This good woman had been called to a distant place, to attend her dying mother, just before the death of Mrs. Elton; and thus Jane was deprived of an able assistant, and most tender friend, and left to pass through the dismal scene of death, without any other than occasional assistance from her compassionate neighbors.

On the day of Mrs. Elton's interment, a concourse of people assembled to listen to the funeral sermon, and to follow to the grave one who had been the object of the envy of some, and of the respect and love of many. Three sisters of Mr. Elton were assembled with their families.—Mrs. Elton had come from a distant part of the country, and had no relatives in ———.

Jane's relations wore the decent gravity that became the occasion; but they were of a hard race, and neither the wreck their brother had made, nor the deep grief of the solitary little creature, awakened their pity. They even seemed to shun manifesting towards her the kindness of common sympathy, lest it should be construed into an intention of taking charge of the orphan.

Jane lost in the depths of her sufferings, seemed insensible to all external things. Her countenance was of a death-like paleness, and her features immovable. In the course of



the sermon, agreeably to the usage established in such cases, the clergyman made a personal address to her, as the nearest relative and chief mourner. She was utterly unable to rise, as she should have done in compliance with custom; and one of her aunts shocked at the omission of what she considered an essential decorum, took her by the arm, and almost lifted her from her seat. She stood like a statue, her senses seeming to take no cognizance of anything. Not a tear escaped, nor a sigh burst from her breaking heart. The sorrow of childhood is usually noisy, and this mute and motionless grief, in a creature so young, and one that had been so happy, touched every heart.

When the services were over, the clergyman supported the trembling frame of the poor child to the place of interment. The coffin was slowly let down into the house appointed for all. Every one who has followed a dear friend to the grave, remembers with shuddering the hollow sound of the first clods that are thrown on the coffin. As they fell heavily, poor Jane shrieked, "oh, mother!" and springing forward, bent over the grave, which, to her, seemed to contain all the world. The sexton, used as he was to pursue his trade amidst the wailings of mourners, saw something peculiar in the misery of the lone child. He dropped the spade, and hastily brushing away the tears that blinded him with the sleeve of his coat, "Why does not some one," he said, "take away the child? it beats all!—her heart's broke!" There was a general bustle in the crowd, and two young ladies, more considerate, or perhaps more tender-hearted, than the rest, kindly passed their arms around her, and led her to her home.

The clergyman of———was one of those who are more zealous for sound doctrine, than benevolent practice: he had chosen on that occasion for his text, "The wages of sin is



death," and had preached a long sermon in the vain endeavour of elucidating the doctrine of original sin. Clergymen who lose such opportunities of instructing their people in the operations of Providence, and the claims of humanity, ought not to wonder if they grow languid, and selfish, and careless of their most obvious duties. Had this gentleman improved this occasion of illustrating the duty of sympathy, by dwelling on the tenderness of our blessed Lord, when he wept with the bereaved sisters at the grave of Lazarus: had he distilled the essence of those texts, and diffused their gracious influence into his sermon—"Bear ye one another's burthens;" "Weep with those who weep;" "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these, ye have done it unto me:" had this preaching usually been in conformity to the teaching of our Saviour, could the scene have followed, which, as a part of Jane Elton's story must be told.

We fear there are many who think there is merit in believing certain doctrines; who, mistaking the true import of that text, "by grace are ye saved," quiet themselves with having, once in their lives, passed through what they deemed conviction and conversion, and from thence believe their salvation is secure.

The house, furniture, and other property of Mr. Elton had lain under an attachment for some time previous to Mrs. Elton's death; but the sale had been delayed in consideration of her approaching dissolution. It was now appointed for the next week; and it therefore became necessary that some arrangement should be made for the destitute orphan.

The day after the funeral, Jane was sitting in her mother's room, which, in her eyes, was consecrated by her sickness and death; the three aunts met at Mr. Elton's house; she heard the ladies approaching through the adjoining apartment, and



hastily taking up her Bible, which she had been trying to read, she drew her little bench behind the curtain of her mother's bed. There is an instinct in childhood, that discerns affection wherever it exists, and shrinks from the coldness of calculating selfishness. In all their adversity, neither Jane, nor her mother, had ever been cheered by a glimmering of kindness from these relatives. Mrs. Elton had founded no expectations on them for her child; but with her usual irresolution, she had shrunk from preparing Jane's mind for the shocks that awaited her.

The three sisters were led in by a young woman who had offered to stay with Jane till some arrangement was made for her. In reply to their asking where she was, the girl pointed to the bed. "There," she said, "taking on *desperately*.—A body would think," added she, "that she had lost her uncles and aunts, as well as her father and mother. And she might as well," (she continued, in a tone low enough not to be heard,) "for any good they will do her."

The eldest sister began the conference by saying, "That she trusted it was not expected she should take Jane upon her hands—that she was not so well off as either of her sisters—that to be sure she had no children; but then Mr. Daggett and herself *calculated* to do a great deal for the Foreign Missionary Society; that no longer ago than that morning, Mr. D. and she had agreed to pay the expense of one of the young Cherokees at the school at——; that there was a great work going on in the world, and as long as they had the heart given them to help it, they could not feel it their duty to withdraw any aid for a mere worldly purpose!"

Mrs. Convers (the second sister) said that she had not any religion, and she did not mean to pretend to any; that she had ways enough to spend her money without sending it to



Owyhee, or the Foreign School; that she and her husband had worked hard, and saved all for their children; and now they meant they should make as good a figure as anybody's children in the country. It took a great deal of money, she said, to pay the dancing-master, and the drawing-master, and the music-master; it was quite impossible for her sisters to think how much it took to dress a family of girls genteely. It was not now, as it used to be when we were girls; now-a-days, girls must have merino shawls, and their winter hats, and summer hats, and prunella shoes, and silk stockings;—it was quite impossible to be decent without them. Besides, she added, as she did not live in the same place with Jane, it was not natural she should feel for her. It was her decided opinion, that Jane had better be put out at once, at some place where she could do light work till she was a little used to it; and she would advise, too, to her changing her name; the child was so young she could not care about a name, and she should be much mortified to have it known, in the town of —— that her daughters had a cousin that was a *hired girl*.

There was something in this harsh counsel which touched Mrs. Wilson's (the younger sister's) pride, though it failed to awaken a sentiment of humanity. She said she desired to be thankful that she had been kept from any such sinful courses as sending her children to a dancing-school; nobody could say she had not done her duty by them; the minister's family was not kept more strict than hers.

"No," said Mrs. Convers, "and by all accounts is not more disorderly."

"Well, that is not our fault, Mrs. Convers, if we plant and water, we cannot give the increase."

Mrs. Wilson should have remembered that God does give



the increase to those that rightly plant, and faithfully water. But Mrs. Wilson's tongue was familiar with many texts that had never entered her understanding, or influenced her heart.

Mrs. Wilson continued—"Sister Convers, I feel it to be my duty to warn you—you, the daughter and grand-daughter of worthy divines who abhorred all such sinful practices, that you should own that you send your children to dancing school, astonishes and grieves my spirit. Do you know that Mr. C——, in reporting the awakening in his parish, mentions that not one of the girls that attended dancing school were among the converts, whereas two, who had engaged to attend it, but had received a remarkable warning in a dream, were among the first and brightest?"

"I would as soon," she continued, "follow one of my children to the grave, as to see her in that broad road to destruction, which leads through a ball-room."

"It is easy enough," replied Mrs. Convers, (adjusting her smart mourning cap at the glass,) "to run down sins we have no fancy for." *So true*

Mrs. Wilson's ready answer was prevented by the entrance of Jane's humble friend, who asked, if the ladies had determined what was to be done with the little girl.

Mrs. Wilson in her vehemence had quite forgotten the object of their meeting, but now brought back to it, and instigated by a feeling of superiority to Mrs. Convers, and a little nettled by the excuses of Mrs. Daggett, which she thought were meant as a boast of superior piety, she said, that as she had no dancing-masters to pay, and had not "*that morning agreed*" to adopt a Cherokee—she could afford to take Jane for a little while. The child, she said, must not think of depending upon her for life; for though she was a widow, and could do what she was a mind to her with her



own, she could not justify herself in taking the children's meat—and she would have added—"to throw it to the dogs,"—but she was interrupted by a person, who, unregarded by the ladies, had taken her seat among them.

This was a middle aged woman, whose mind had been unsettled in her youth by misfortunes. Having no mischievous propensities, she was allowed to indulge her vagrant inclinations, in wandering from house to house, and town to town; her stimulated imagination furnishing continual amusement to the curious by her sagacious observations, and unfailing mirth to the young and vulgar, by the fanciful medley in which she arrayed her person. There were some who noticed in her a quickness of feeling that indicated original sensibility, which, perhaps, had been the cause of her sufferings. The dogs of a surly master would sometimes bark at her, because her dress resembled the obnoxious livery of the beggar—a class they had been taught to chase with pharisaical antipathy. But except when her timid nature was alarmed by the onset of dogs, which she always called the devil's servants, crazy Bet found a welcome wherever she went.

It is common for persons in her unfortunate circumstances to seek every scene of excitement. The sober, sedate manners of the New England people, and the even tenor of their lives, afford but few of these, and these few are, for the most part, of a serious if not a gloomy character. Wherever there was an awakening, or a camp meeting, crazy Bet was sure to be found. She was often seen by moonlight, wandering in the church-yard, plucking the nettles from the graves, and wreathing the monuments with ground-pine. She would watch for whole nights by the side of a grave in her native village, where twenty years before were deposited the remains of her lover, who was drowned on the day before they were



to have been married. She would range the woods, and climb to the very mountain's-top, to get sweet flowers, to scatter over the mound of earth that marked his grave. She would plant rose bushes and lilies there, and when they bloomed, pluck them up, because she said their purity and brightness mocked the decay below.

She has been seen, when the sun came over the eastern mountain's brow, and shot its first ray on the grave, to clap her hands, and heard to shout, "I see an angel in the sun, and he saith, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such, the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'"

Poor Bet was sure to follow in every funeral procession, and sometimes she would thrust herself amidst the mourners, and say, "the dead could not rest in their graves, if they were not followed there by one true mourner." She has been seen to spring forward when the men were carelessly placing the coffin in the grave, with the head to the east, and exclaim, "are ye heathens, that ye serve the dead thus? Know ye not, the 'Lord cometh in the east.'"

She always lingered behind after the crowd had dispersed, and busily moved and removed the sods; and many a time has she fallen asleep, with her head resting on the new-made grave, for, she said, there was no sleep so quiet as 'where the wicked did not trouble.'

The quick eye of crazy Bet detected, through their thin guise, the pride and hypocrisy and selfishness of the sisters. She interrupted Mrs. Wilson as she was concluding her most inappropriate quotation, 'Throw it to the dogs;' said she, 'It is more like taking the prey from the wolf.' She then rose, singing in an under voice,



“Oh! be the law of love fulfilled  
In every act and thought;  
Each angry passion far removed,  
Each selfish view forgot.”

She approached the bed, and withdrawing the curtain, exposed the little sufferer to view. She had laid the open Bible on the pillow, where she had often rested beside her mother, and laying her cheek on it, had fallen asleep. It was open at the 5th chapter of John, which she had so often read to her mother, that she had turned instinctively to it. The page was blistered with her tears.

Careless of the future, which to her seemed to admit no light, her exhausted nature had found relief in sleep, at the very moment her aunts were so unfeelingly deciding her fate. Her pale cheek, still wet with her tears, and the deep sadness of a face of uncommon sweetness, would have warmed with compassion any breast that had not been steeled by selfishness.

“Shame, shame, upon you!” said the maniac; “has pride turned your hearts to stone, that ye cannot shelter this poor little ewe-lamb in your fold? Ah! ye may spread your branches, like the green bay tree, but the tempest will come, and those who look for you shall not find you; but this little frost-bitten bud shall bloom in the paradise of God for ever and ever.”

Untying a piece of crape which she had wound around her throat, (for she was never without some badge of mourning,) she stooped and gently wiped the tears from Jane’s cheek, saying, in a low tone, “Bottles full of odours, which are the tears of saints; then rising, she carefully closed the curtains, and busied herself for some minutes in pinning them together. She then softly, and on tiptoe, returned to her seat; and tak-



ing some ivy from her broken straw-bonnet, began twisting it with the crape. "This," said she, "is a weed for Elder Carrol's hat; he lost his wife yesterday, and I have been to the very top of Taghconnick to get him a weed, that shall last fresh as long as his grief. See," added she, and she held it up, laughing, "it has begun to wilt already; it is a true token."

She then rose from her seat, and with a quick step, between running and walking, left the room; but returning as suddenly, she said slowly and emphatically, "Offend not this little one; for her angel does stand before my Father. It were better that a mill-stone were hanged about your neck." Then, courtseying to the ground, she left them.

Bet's solemn and slow manner of pronouncing this warning, was so different from her usually hurried utterance, that it struck a momentary chill to the hearts of the sisters. Mrs. Daggett was the first to break the silence.

"What does she mean?" said she. "Has Jane experienced religion?"

"Experienced religion! — no," replied Mrs. Wilson. "How should she? She has not been to a meeting since her mother was first taken sick; and no longer ago than the day after her mother's death, when I talked to her of her corrupt state by nature, and the opposition of her heart, (for I felt it to be my duty, at this peculiar season, to open to her the great truths of religion, and I was faithful to her soul, and did not scruple to declare the whole counsel,) she looked at me as if she was in a dumb stupor. I told her the judgments of an offended God were made manifest towards her in a remarkable manner; and then I put it to her conscience, whether if she was sure her mother had gone where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, she should be recon-



ciled to the character of God, and be willing herself to promote his glory, by suffering the like condemnation? She did not reply one word, or give the least symptom of a gracious understanding. But when Mrs. Harvey entered, just as I was concluding, and passed her arm around Jane, and said to her, 'My child, God does not willingly grieve or afflict you, the child sobbed out, 'Oh no! Mrs. Harvey, so my mother told me, and I am sure of it.'

"No, no," she added, after a moment's hesitation; "this does not look as if Jane had a hope. But, sister Daggett, I wonder you should mind any thing crazy Bet says. She is possessed with as many devils as were sent out of Mary Magdalen."

"I don't mind her, Mrs. Wilson; but I know some very good people who say, that many a thing she has foretold has come to pass; and especially in seasons of affliction, they say, she is very busy with the devil."

"I don't know how that may be," replied Mrs. Wilson; "but as I mean to do my duty by this child, I don't feel myself touched by Bet's crazy ranting."

Mrs. Daggett, nettled by her sister's hint, rose, and said, that, as she was going in the afternoon to attend a meeting in a distant part of the town, ("for," said she, "no one can say that distance or weather ever keeps me from my duties,") she had no more time to waste.

Mrs. Convers' husband drove to the door in a smart gig, and she took leave of her sisters, observing, she was glad the child was going to be so well provided for. As she drove away, crazy Bet, who was standing by the gate, apparently intently reading the destiny of a young girl, in the palm of her hand, fixed her eyes for a moment on Mrs. Convers, and



whispered to the girl, "All the good seed that fell on that ground was choked by thorns long ago."

Mrs. Wilson told Jane's attendant, Sally, to inform her, she might come to her house the next day, and stay there for the present.

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## CHAPTER II.

Or, haply, prest with cares and woes,  
Too soon thou hast began  
To wander forth.—BURNS.

JANE received the intelligence of her destination without the slightest emotion. The world was “all before her,” and she cared not whither led her “mournful way.”

Happily for her, the humble friend, mentioned in the beginning of her history, Mary Hull, returned on that day, after having performed the last act of filial duty. Jane poured all her sorrows into Mary’s bosom, and felt already a degree of relief that she had not believed her condition admitted.

Such is the elastic nature of childhood; its moral, like its physical constitution, is subject to the most sudden changes.

Mary having assuaged the wounds of her youthful friend with the balm of tender sympathy and just consolation, undertook the painful, but necessary, task of exposing to Jane the evils before her, that she might fortify her against them; that, as she said, being “fore-warned, she might be fore-armed.”

She did not soften the trials of dependence upon a sordid and harsh nature. She told her what demands would be made on her integrity, her patience, and her humility.



"But, my child," cried she, "do not be downhearted. There has One 'taken you up who will not leave you, nor forsake you.' 'The fires may be about you, but they will not kindle on you.' Make the Bible your counsellor; you will always find some good word there, that will be a light to you in the darkest night: and do not forget the daily sacrifice of prayer; for, as the priests under the old covenant were nourished by a part of that which they offered, so, when the sacrifice of praise is sent upward by the broken and contrite heart, there is a strength cometh back upon our own souls: blessed be His name, it is what the world cannot give."

Mary's advice fell upon a good and honest heart, and we shall see that it brought forth much fruit.

The evening was spent in packing Jane's wardrobe, which had been well stocked by her profuse and indulgent parents. Mary had been told too, that the creditors of Mr. Elton would not touch the wearing apparel of his wife. This was, therefore, carefully packed and prepared for removal; and Mary, who with her stock of heavenly wisdom had some worldly prudence, hinted to Jane, that she had better keep her things out of the sight of her craving cousins.

Jane took up her mother's Bible, and asked Mary, with a trembling voice, if she thought she might be permitted to take that.

"Certainly," replied Mary, "no one will dispute your right to it; it is not like worldly goods, we will not touch the spoils, though we were tempted by more than the 'goodly Babylonish garment, the two hundred shekels of silver, and the wedge of gold' that made Achan to sin."

In obedience to the strictest dictates of honesty, Mary forbore from permitting her zeal for Jane's interests to violate the letter of the law. She was so scrupulous, that she



would not use a family trunk, but took a large cedar chest of her own to pack the clothes in.

While they were busily occupied with these preparations, Jane received a note from her aunt, saying, that she advised her to secure some small articles which would never be missed: some of "the spoons, table-linen, her mother's ivory work-box," &c., &c. The note concluded—"As I have undertaken the charge of you for the present, it is but right you should take my advice. There is no doubt my brother's creditors have cheated him a hundred-fold the amount of these things; for, poor man! with all his faults, he was so generous, any body could take him in; besides, though these things might help to pay the expense I must be at in keeping you, they will be a mere nothing divided among so many creditors. I should be the last, child, to advise to any thing unlawful."

"Poor woman!" said Mary, to whom Jane had handed the note, and then checking the expression of her disgust at what to her upright mind seemed plain dishonesty—she merely added, "we'll keep on the sure side, Jane; clean hands make light hearts."

The next morning arrived, and Mary arose before the dawn, in order to remove Jane early, and save her the pain of witnessing the preparations for the vendue. Jane understood her kind friend's design, and silently acquiesced in it, for she had too much good sense to expose herself to any unnecessary suffering. But when every thing was in readiness, and the moment of departure arrived, she shrunk back from Mary's offered arm, and sinking into a chair, yielded involuntarily to the torrent of her feelings. She looked around upon the room and its furniture as if they were her friends.

It has been said by one, who well understands the myste-



ries of feeling, that objects which are silent every where else, have a voice in the home of our childhood. Jane looked for the last time at the bed, where she had often sported about her mother, and rejoiced in her tender caresses—at the curtains, stamped with illustrations of the Jewish history, which had often employed and wearied her ingenuity in comprehending their similitudes—at the footstool on which she had sat beside her mother—and the old family clock,

“Whose stroke ’twas heaven to hear,  
When soft it spoke a promised pleasure near.”

Her eye turned to the glass, which now sent back her woe-begone image, and she thought of the time, but a little while past, when elated with that “promised pleasure near,” she had there surveyed her form arrayed in her prettiest dress,—now, the rainbow tints had faded into the dark cloud.

She rose and walked to the open window, about which she had trained a beautiful honey-suckle. The sun had just risen, and the dew-drops on its leaves sparkled in his rays.

“Oh, Mary!” said she, “even my honey-suckle seems to weep for me.”

A robin had built its nest on the vine; and often as she sat watching her sleeping mother, she had been cheered with its sprightly note, and maternal care of its young. She looked to the nest—the birds had flown;—“They too,” she exclaimed, “have gone from our home.”

“No, Jane,” replied Mary; “they have been provided with another home; and He who careth for them, will care much more for you.”

Mary might have quoted (but she was not addicted to any profane works) the beautiful language of a native poet—



“He who from zone to zone  
Guides through the boundless sky their certain flight,  
In the long way that you must trace alone,  
Will guide your steps aright.”

“We shall not,” she said, “be at your aunt’s in time for breakfast; here, tie on your hat, you will need all your strength and courage, and you must not waste any on flowers and birds.”

Jane obeyed the wise admonition of her friend; and with faltering steps, and without allowing herself time to look again at any thing, hastily passed through the little courtyard in front of their house.

The morning was clear and bright; and stimulated by the pure air, and nerved by the counsels Mary suggested as they walked along, Jane entered her new home with a manner that indicated the struggle of her self-respect with her timidity.

Perhaps her timidity, appealing to Mrs. Wilson’s love of authority, produced a softer feeling than she had before shown to Jane; or perhaps (for scarcely any nature is quite hardened), the forlornness of the child awakened a transient sentiment of compassion,—she took her hand, and told her she was welcome. The children stared at her, as if they had never seen her before, but Jane’s down-cast eye, a little clouded by the gathering tears, saved her from feeling the gaze of their vulgar curiosity.

Jane, in entering the family of Mrs. Wilson, was introduced to as new a scene as if she had been transported to a foreign country.

Mrs. Wilson’s character might have been originally cast in the same mould with Mr. Elton’s, but circumstances had given it a different modification. She had married early in



life a man, who, not having energy enough for the exercise of authority, was weak and vain, tenacious of the semblance, and easily cozened by the shadow, while his wife retained the substance. Mrs. Wilson, without having the pride of her nature at all subdued, became artful and trickish; she was sordid and ostentatious; a careful fellow-worker with her husband in the acquisition of their property, she secured to herself all the power and reputation of its outlay. Whenever a contribution was levied for an Education or Tract Society, for Foreign Missions, the Cherokees, or Osages,—Mrs. Wilson accompanied her donation, which on the whole was quite handsome, with a remark, that what she did give, she gave with a willing heart; that women could not command much money, for it was the duty of wives to submit themselves to their husbands. After Mrs. Wilson became sole mistress of her estate, the simple and credulous, who remembered her professions, wondered her gifts were not enlarged with her liberty. But Mrs. Wilson would say that the widow was the prey of the wicked, and that her duty to her children prevented her indulging her generous feelings towards those pious objects which lay nearest her heart.

Mrs. Wilson had fancied herself one of the subjects of an awakening at an early period of her life; had passed through the ordeal of a church-examination with great credit, having depicted in glowing colors the opposition of her natural heart to the decrees, and her subsequent joy in the doctrine of election. She thus assumed the form of godliness without feeling its power. We fear that in those times of excitement, during which many pass from indifference to holiness, and many are converted from sin to righteousness, there are also many who, like Mrs. Wilson, delude themselves and others with vain forms of words, and professions of faith.



Mrs. Wilson was often heard to denounce those who insisted on the necessity of good works, as Pharisees;—she was thankful, she said, that she should not presume to appear before her Judge with any of the “filthy rags of her own righteousness;”—it would be easy getting to heaven if the work in any way depended on ourselves;—any body could “deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly.” How easy it is, we leave to those to determine who have sought to adjust their lives by this divine rule.

Mrs. Wilson rejected the name of the Pharisee; but the proud, oppressive, bitter spirit of the Jewish bigot was manifest in the complacency with which she regarded her own faith, and the illiberality she cherished towards every person, of every denomination, who did not believe what she believed, and act according to her rule of right. As might be expected, her family was regulated according to “the letter,” but the “spirit that giveth life,” was not there. Religion was the ostensible object of every domestic arrangement; but you might look in vain for the peace and good will which a voice from heaven proclaimed to be the objects of the mission of our Lord.

Mrs. Wilson’s children produced such fruits as might be expected from her culture. The timid among them had recourse to constant evasion, and to the meanest artifices to hide the violation of laws which they hated; and the bolder were engaged in a continual conflict with the mother, in which rebellion often trampled on authority.

Jane had been gently led in the bands of love. She had been taught even more by the example than the precepts of her mother.

She had seen her mother bear with meekness the asperity



and unreasonableness of her father's temper, and often turn away his wrath with a soft answer.

The law of imitation is deeply impressed on our nature. Jane had insensibly fallen into her mother's ways, and had, thus early, acquired a habit of self-command. Mrs. Elton, though, alas, negligent of some of her duties, watched over the expanding character of her child with Christian fidelity. "There she had garnered up her heart." She knew that amiable dispositions were not to be trusted, and she sought to fortify her child's mind with Christian principles. She sowed the seed, and looked with undoubting faith for the promised blessing.

"I must soon sleep," she would say to Mary, "but the seed is already springing up. I am sure it will not lack the dews of Heaven; and you, Mary, may live to see, though I shall not, 'first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear.'"

Mary had seconded Mrs. Elton's efforts. She looked upon herself as an humble instrument; but she was a most efficient one. She had a rare and remarkable knack at applying rules, so that her life might be called a commentary on the precepts of the Gospel. Mary's practical religion had, sometimes, conveyed a reproach (the only reproach a Christian may indulge in) to Mrs. Wilson, who revenged herself by remarking, that "Mary was indulging in that soul-destroying doctrine of the Methodists—*perfection*;" and then she would add (jogging her foot, a motion that, with her, always indicated a mental parallel, the result of which was, 'I am holier than thou'), "there is no error so fatal, as resting in the duties of the second table." Mrs. Wilson had not learned that the duties of the second table cannot be done, if the others are left undone; the branches must be sustained by



the trunk ; for He, from whose wisdom there is no appeal, has said, " If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments."

Happily for our little friend, Mary was not to be removed far from her ; an agreeable situation was, unexpectedly, offered to her grateful acceptance.



## CHAPTER III.

Now Spring returns, but not to me returns  
The vernal year my better days have known;  
Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,  
And all the joys of life with health are flown.

BRUCE.

A FEW weeks before the death of Mrs. Elton, a Mr. Lloyd, a Quaker, who was travelling with his wife and infant child, for the benefit of Mrs. Lloyd's health, had stopped at the inn in ———. Mrs. Lloyd was rapidly declining with consumption. On this day she had, as is not unfrequent in the fluctuation of this disease, felt unusually well. Her cough was lulled by the motion of the carriage, and she had requested her husband to permit her to ride further than his prudence would have dictated.

The heat and unusual exertion proved too much for her. In the evening she was seized with a hemorrhage, which reduced her so much as to render it unsafe to move her. She faded away quietly, and fell into the arms of death as gently as a leaf falleth from its stem, resigning her spirit in faith to Him who gave it.

An extraordinary attachment subsisted between Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd, which had its foundation in the similarity of



their characters, education, views, and pursuits; and had been nourished by the circumstances that had drawn and kept them together.

Three years after their marriage, Mrs. Lloyd gave birth to a girl. This event filled up the measure of their joy. A few weeks after its birth, as Mr. Lloyd took the infant from its mother's bosom, and pressed it fondly to his own, he said, "Rebecca, the promise is to us and our children; the Lord grant that we may train His gift in His nurture and admonition."

"Thou mayest, dear Robert; God grant it," Rebecca mournfully replied; "but the way is closed up to me. Do not shudder thus, but prepare thy mind for the 'will of the Lord.' I could have wished to have lived, for thy sake and my little one; but I will not rebel, for I know all is right."

Mr. Lloyd hoped his wife was needlessly alarmed; but he found from her physician, that immediately after the birth of the child, some alarming symptoms had appeared, which indicated a hectic. Mrs. Lloyd had begged they might be concealed from her husband, from the generous purpose of saving him, as long as possible, useless anxiety. The disease, however, had taken certain hold, and that morning, after a conversation with her physician, during which her courage had surprised him, she resolved to begin the difficult task of fortifying her husband for the approaching calamity.

Spring came on, and its sweet influences penetrated to the sick room of Rebecca. Her health seemed amended, and her spirits refreshed; and when Mr. Lloyd proposed that they should travel, she cheerfully consented. But she cautioned her husband not to be flattered by an apparent amendment, for, said she, "though my wayward disease may be coaxed into a little clemency, it will not spare me."



As she prophesied, her sufferings were mitigated; but it was but too manifest that no permanent amendment was to be expected. The disease made very slow progress; one would have thought it shrunk from marring so young and so fair a work. Her spirit, too, enjoyed the freedom and beauty of the country. As they passed up the fertile shores of the Connecticut, Rebecca's benevolent heart glowed with gratitude to the Father of all, at the spectacle of so many of her fellow-creatures enjoying the rich treasures of Providence; cast into a state of society the happiest for their moral improvement, where they had neither the miseries of poverty, nor the temptations of riches. She would raise her eyes to the clear heaven, would look on the "misty mountain's top," and then on the rich meadows through which they were passing, and which were now teeming with the summer's fulness, and would say, "Dear Robert, is there any heart so cold, that it does not melt in this vision of the power and the bounty of the Lord of heaven and earth? Do not sorrow for me, when I am going to a more perfect communion with Him, for I shall see him as he is."

From the Connecticut they passed by the romantic road that leads through the plains of West Springfield, Westfield, &c. There is no part of our country, abundant as it is in the charms of nature, more lavishly adorned with romantic scenery. The carriage slowly traced its way on the side of a mountain, from which the imprisoned road had with difficulty been won; a noisy stream dashed impetuously along at their left, and as they ascended the mountain, they still heard it before them, leaping from rock to rock, now almost losing itself in the deep pathway it had made, and then rushing with increased violence over its stony bed.

"This young stream," said Mr. Lloyd, "reminds one of



the turbulence of headstrong childhood : I can hardly believe it to be the same we admired, so leisurely winding its peaceful way into the bosom of the Connecticut."

"Thou likest the sobriety of maturity," replied Rebecca ; "but I confess that there is something delightful to my imagination in the elastic bound of this infant stream ; it reminds me of the joy of untamed spirits, and undiminished strength."

The travellers' attention was withdrawn from the wild scene before them to the appearance of the heavens, by their coachman, who observed that "never in his days had he seen clouds make so fast ; it was not," he said, "five minutes since the first speck rose above the hill before them, and now there was not enough blue sky for a man to swear by :—but," added he, looking with a lengthening visage to what he thought an interminable hill before them, "the lightning will be saved the trouble of coming down to us, for if my poor beasts ever get us to the top, we may reach up and take it."

Having reached the top of the next acclivity, they perceived by the roadside, a log hut ; over the door was a slab, with a rude and mysterious painting (which had been meant for a foaming can and a plate of gingerbread), explained underneath by "cake and beer for sale." This did not look very inviting, but it promised a better shelter from the rain, for the invalid, than the carriage could afford. Mr. Lloyd opened the door, and lifted his wife over a rivulet, which actually ran between the sill of the house and the floor-planks that had not originally been long enough for the dimensions of the apartment.

The mistress of the mansion, a fat middle-aged woman, who sat with a baby in her arms at a round table, at which there were four other children eating from a pewter dish placed in the middle, rose, and having ejected the eldest boy



from a chair by a very unceremonious slap, offered it to Mrs. Lloyd, and resumed her seat, quietly finishing her meal. Her husband, a ruddy, good-natured, hardy-looking mountaineer, had had the misfortune, by some accident in his childhood, to lose the use of both his legs, which were now ingeniously folded into the same chair on which he sat. He turned to the coachman, who, having secured his horses, had just entered, and smiling at his consternation, said, "Why, friend, you look scare't, pretty pokerish weather, to be sure, but then we don't mind it up here;" then turning to the child next him, who, in gazing at the strangers, had dropped half the food she was conveying to her mouth, he said,—"*Desdemony*, don't scatter the 'tatoes so."—"But last week," he continued, resuming his address to the coachman, "there was the most *tedious* spell of weather I have sen the week before last thanksgiving, when my wife and I went down into the lower part of Becket, to hear Deacon Hollister's funeral *sar-mont*—Don't you remember, Tempy, that musical fellow that was there?—'I don't see,' says he, 'the use of the minister preaching up so much about hell-fire,' says he, 'it is a very good doctrine,' says he, 'to preach down on Connecticut River, but,' says he, 'I should not think it would frighten any body in such a cold place as Becket.'"

A bright flash, that seemed to fire the heavens, succeeded by a tremendous clap of thunder, which made the hovel tremble, terrified all the group, except the fearless speaker.

"A pretty smart flash to be sure; but, as I was saying, it is nothing to that storm we had last week.—*Valorus*, pull that hat out of the window, so the gentleman can see.—There, sir," said he, "just look at that big maple tree, that was blown down, if it had come one yard nearer my house, it would have crushed it to atoms. Ah, this is a nice place



as you will find any where," he continued (for he saw Mr. Lloyd was listening attentively to him), "to bring up boys ; it makes them hardy and spirited, to live here with the wind roaring about them, and the thunder rattling right over their heads : why they don't mind it any more than my woman's spinning-wheel, which, to be sure, makes a dumb noise sometimes."

Our travellers were not a little amused with the humour of this man, who had a natural philosophy that a stoic might have envied. "Friend," said Mr. Lloyd, "you have a singular fancy about names ; what may be the name of that chubby little girl who is playing with my wife's fan ?"

"Yes, sir, I am a little notional about names ; that girl, sir, I call *Octavy*, and that lazy little dog that stands by her, is *Rodolphus*."

"And this baby," said Mr. Lloyd, kindly giving the astonished little fellow his watch chain to play with, "this must be *Vespasian* or *Agricola*."

"No, sir, no ; I met with a disappointment about that boy's name—what you may call a slip between the cup and the lip—when he was born, the women asked me what I meant to call him ? I told them I did not mean to be in any hurry ; for you must know, sir, the way I get my names, I buy a book of one of them pedlers that are going over the mountain with tin-ware and brooms, and books and pamphlets, and one notion and another ; that is, I don't buy out and out, but we make a swap ; they take some of my wooden dishes, and let me have the *vally* in books ; for you must know I am a great reader, and mean all my children shall have larning too, though it is pretty tough scratching for it. Well, sir, as I was saying about this boy, I found a name just to hit my fancy, for I can pretty generally suit myself ;



the name was Sophronius; but just about that time, as the deuce would have it, my wife's father died, and the gin'ral had been a very gin'rous man to us, and so to compliment the old gentleman, I concluded to call him Solomon Wheeler."

Mr. Lloyd smiled, and throwing a dollar into the baby's lap, said, "There is something, my little fellow, to make up for your loss." The sight and the gift of a silver dollar produced a considerable sensation among the mountaineers. The children gathered round the baby to examine the splendid favour. The mother said, "The child was not old enough to make its manners to the gentleman, but he was as much beholden to him as if he could." The father only seemed insensible, and contented himself with remarking, with his usual happy nonchalance, that he "guessed it was easier getting money down country, than it was up on the hills."

"Very true, my friend," replied Mr. Lloyd, "and I should like to know how you support your family here. You do not appear to have any farm."

"No, Sir," replied the man, laughing, "it would puzzle me, with my legs, to take care of a farm; but then I always say, that as long as a man has his wits he has something to work with. This is a pretty cold sappy soil up here, but we make out to raise all our sauce,\* and enough besides to fat a couple of pigs on; then, Sir, as you see, my woman and I keep a stock of cake and beer, and tansy bitters—a nice trade for a cold stomach; there is considerable travel on the road, and people get considerable dry by the time they get up here, and we find it a good business; and then I turn wooden bowls and dishes, and go out peddling once or twice a-year; and there is not an old woman, or a young one either,

\* Sauce, pronounced *saace*, is a common name for vegetables in New-England.



for the matter of that, but I can coax them to buy a dish or two; I take my pay in provisions or clothing; all the cash I get is by the beer and cake: and now Sir, though I say it, that may be should not say it, there is not a more independent man in the town of Becket than I am, though there is them that's more forehanded; but I pay my minister's tax and my school-tax as reg'lar as any of them."

Mr. Lloyd admired the ingenuity and contentment of this man, his enjoyment of the privilege, the "glorious privilege," of every New-England man, of "being independent." But his pleasure was somewhat abated by an appearance of a want of neatness and order, which would have contributed so much to the comfort of the family, and which, being a Quaker, he deemed essential to it.

He looked at the little stream of water we have mentioned, and which the rain had already swollen so much that it seemed to threaten an inundation of the house; and observing that neither the complexion of the floor nor of the children seemed to have been benefited by its proximity, he remarked to the man that he "should think a person of his ingenuity would have contrived some mode of turning the stream."

"Why, yes, Sir," said the man, "I suppose I might, for I have got a book that treats upon hydrostatics and them things; but I'm calculating to build in the fall, and so I think we may as well musquash along till then."

"To build! Do explain to me how that is to be done?"

"Why, Sir," said he, taking a box from the shelf behind him, which had a hole in the centre of the top, through which the money was passed in, but afforded no facility for withdrawing it, "my woman and I agreed to save all the cash we could get for two years, and I should not be afraid



to venture there is thirty dollars there, Sir. The neighbors in these parts are very kind to a poor man; one will draw the timber, and another will saw the boards, and they will all come to raising, and bring their own spirits into the bargain. Oh, Sir, it must be a poor shack that can't make a turn to get a house over his head."

Mr. Lloyd took ten dollars from his pocket-book, and slipping it into the gap, said, "There is a small sum, my friend, and I wish it may be so expended as to give to thy new dwelling such conveniences as will enable thy wife to keep it neat. It will help on the trade, too; for depend upon it, there is nothing makes a house look so inviting to a traveller as cleanliness and order."

Our mountaineer's indifference was vanquished by so valuable a donation. "You are the most gin'rous man, Sir," said he, "that ever journeyed this way; and if I don't remember your advice, you may say there is no such thing as gratitude upon earth."

By this time the rain had subsided, the clouds were rolling over, the merry notes of the birds sallying from their shelters, welcomed the returning rays of the sun, and the deep, unclouded azure in the west promised a delightful afternoon.

The travellers took a kind leave of the grateful cottagers, and as they drove away—"Tempy," said the husband, "if the days of miracles weren't quite entirely gone by, I should think we had 'entertained angels unawares.'"

"I think you might better say," replied the good woman, "that the angels have entertained us; any how, that sick lady will be an angel before long; she looks as good and as beautiful as one now."

It was on the evening of this day, that Mr. and Mrs.



Lloyd arrived at the inn in the village of ———, which, as we have before stated, was the scene where her excellent and innocent life closed. She expressed a desire that she might not be removed; she wished not to have the peace of her mind interrupted by any unnecessary agitation. Whenever she felt herself a little better, she would pass a part of the day in riding. Never did any one in the full flush of health enjoy more than she, from communion with her Heavenly Father, through the visible creation. She read with understanding the revelations of his goodness, in the varied expressions of nature's beautiful face.

"Do you know," said she to her husband, "that I prefer the narrow vales of the Housatonic to the broader lands of the Connecticut? It certainly matters little where our dust is laid, if it be consecrated by Him who is the 'resurrection and the life;' but I derive a pleasure which I could not have conceived of, from the expectation of having my body repose in this still valley, under the shadow of that beautiful hill."

"I, too, prefer this scenery," said Mr. Lloyd, seeking to turn the conversation, for he could not yet but contemplate with dread, what his courageous wife spoke of with a tone of cheerfulness. "I prefer it, because it has a more domestic aspect. There is, too, a more perfect and intimate union of the sublime and beautiful. These mountains that surround us, and are so near to us on every side, seem to me like natural barriers, by which the Father has secured for His children the gardens He has planted for them by the river's side."

"Yes," said Rebecca, "and methinks they inclose a sanctuary, a temple, from which the brightness of His presence is never withdrawn. Look," said she, as the carriage passed over a hill that rose above the valley, and was a crown of



beauty to it ; “look, how gracefully and modestly that beautiful stream winds along under the broad shadows of those trees and clustering vines, as if it sought to hide the beauty that sparkles so brightly whenever a beam of light touches it. Oh ! my Rebecca,” said she, turning fondly to her child, “I could wish thy path led along these still waters, far from the stormy waves of the rude world—far from its ‘vanities and vexation of spirit.’”

“If that is thy wish, my love,” said her husband, looking earnestly at her, “it shall be a law to me.”

Mrs. Lloyd’s tranquillity had been swept away for a moment, by the rush of thought that was produced by casting her mind forward to the destiny of her child ; but it was only for a moment. Hers was the trust of a mind long and thoroughly disciplined by Christian principles. Her face resumed its wonted repose, as she said, “Dear Robert, I have no wish but to leave all to thy discretion, under the guidance of the Lord.”

It cannot be deemed strange that Mr. Lloyd should have felt a particular interest in scenes for which his wife had expressed such a partiality. He looked upon them with much the same feeling that the sight of a person awakens who has been loved by a departed friend. They seemed to have a sympathy for him ; and he lingered at —— without forming any plan for the future, till he was roused from his inactivity by hearing the sale of Mr. Elton’s property spoken of. He had passed the place with Rebecca, and they had together admired its secluded and picturesque situation. The house stood at a little distance from the road, more than half hid by two patriarchal elms. Behind the house, the grounds descended gradually to the Housatonic, whose nourishing dews kept them arrayed in beautiful verdure.



On the opposite side of the river, and from its very margin, rose a precipitous mountain, with its rich garniture of beach, maple, and linden; tree surmounting tree, and the images of all sent back by the clear mirror below.

Mr. Lloyd had no family ties to Philadelphia. He preferred a country life; not supinely to dream away existence, but he hoped there to cultivate and employ a "talent for doing good;" that talent which a noble adventurer declared he most valued, and which, though there is a field for its exercise wherever any members of the human family are, he compassed sea and land to find new worlds in which to expend it.

Mr. Lloyd purchased the place and furniture, precisely as it had been left on the morning of the sale by Jane and her friend Mary.



## CHAPTER IV.

She, half an angel in her own account,  
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,  
Though not a grace appears on strictest search,  
But that she fasts, and item, goes to church.

COWPER.

THE excellent character of Mary Hull had been spoken of to Mr. Lloyd by his landlady, and he was convinced that she was precisely the person to whom he should be satisfied to commit the superintendence of his family. Accordingly, on the evening of the sale, he sent a messenger to Mrs. Wilson's with the following note:—

“Robert Lloyd, having purchased the place of the late Mr. Elton, would be glad to engage Mary Hull to take charge of his family. Wages, and all other matters, shall be arranged to her satisfaction. He takes the liberty to send by the bearer, for Jane Elton, a work-box, dressing-glass, and a few other small articles, for which he has no use, and which must have to her a value from association with her late residence.”

Mrs. Wilson had no notion that any right could be prior to hers in her house. She took the note from the servant,



and, notwithstanding he ventured to say he believed it was not meant for her, she read it first with no very satisfied air, and then turning to one of the children, she told her to call Mary Hull to her. The servant placed the things on the table, and left the room.

"So," said she to Jane, who was looking at her for some explanation of the sudden apparition of the work-box, &c.— "So, Miss, you have seen fit to disobey the first order I took the trouble to give you. I should like to know how you dared to leave these things after my positive orders."

"I did not understand your note, ma'am, to contain positive orders; and Mary and I did not think it was quite right to take the things."

"Right! pretty judges of right to be sure. She a hired girl, and a Methodist into the bargain. I don't know how she dares to judge over my head; and you, miss, I tell you once for all, I allow no child in my house to judge of right and wrong; children have no reason, and they ought to be very thankful, when they fall into the hands of those that are capable of judging for them. Here," said she to Mary, who now entered in obedience to her summons; "here is a proposal of a place for you, from that Quaker that buried his wife last week. I suppose you call yourself your own mistress, and you can do as you like about it; but as you are yet a young woman, Mary Hull, and this man is a young widower, and nobody knows who, I should think it a great risk for you to live with him; for, if nothing worse comes of it, you may be sure there is not a person in this town that won't think you are trying to get him for a husband."

Mary was highly gratified with the thought of returning to the place where she had passed a large and happy portion of her life, and she did not hesitate to say, that "she should



not stand so much in her own light as to refuse so excellent a place; that from all she had heard said of Mr. Lloyd, he was a gentleman far above her condition in life; and therefore she thought no person would be silly enough to suppose she took the place from so foolish a design as Mrs. Wilson suggested; and she should take care that her conduct should give no occasion for reproach."

"Well," said Mrs. Wilson, chagrined that her counsel was not compulsory, "it does amaze me to see how some people strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."

Mary did not condescend to notice this remark, but proceeded quietly to remove the articles Mr. Lloyd had sent, which she succeeded in doing, without any farther remark from Mrs. Wilson, who prudently restrained the exercise of her authority while there was one present independent enough to oppose its current.

"Oh, Mary," said Jane, when they were alone, "how glad I am you are going to live with such a good man; how happy you must be! And I too, Mary;" and she hastily brushed away a tear, "I am; at least I should be very happy when I have such a kind friend as you are so near to me."

"Yes, yes, dear Jane, try to be happy; this foolish aunt of yours will try you like the fire, but I look to see you come out of it as gold from the furnace: keep up a good heart, my child, it is a long lane that never turns."

The friends separated, but not till Mary had, with her usual caution, carefully packed away Jane's new treasures, saying, as she did it, "that it was best to put temptation out of sight."

Mary's plain and neat appearance, and her ingenuous, sensible countenance, commended her at once to Mr. Lloyd's



favor, and she entered immediately upon the duties of her new and responsible situation.

We must now introduce those who are willing to go farther with us in the history of Jane Elton, to the family of Mrs. Wilson, where they will see she had a school for the discipline of Christian character.

"Jane," said Mrs. Wilson to her on the morning after Mary's departure, "you know, child, the trouble and expense of taking you upon my hands is very great; but it did not seem suitable that, being my brother's daughter, you should be put out at present: you must remember, child, that I am at liberty to send you away at any time, whereas, as you will always be in debt to me, you can never be at liberty to go when you choose. It is a great trial to me to take you, but the consciousness of doing my duty, and more than my duty to you, supports me under it. Now as to what I expect from you:—in the first place, my word must be your law; you must not hesitate to do any thing that I require of you; never think of asking a reason for what I command—it is very troublesome and unreasonable to do so. Visiting, you must give up entirely; I allow my children to waste none of their time in company: meetings I shall wish you to attend when you have not work to do at home; for I do not wish you to neglect the means of grace, though I am sensible that your heart must be changed before they can do you any good. You must help Martha do the ironing, and assist Elvira with the clear starching and other matters; Nancy will want your aid about the beds; Sally is but young, and requires more care than I can give her, for my time is at present chiefly spent in instructing the young converts; and therefore I shall look to you to take the charge of Sally; and I expect you to do the mending and making for David when he comes home;



the other boys will want now and then a stitch or two ; and, in short, miss, (and she increased the asperity of her tone, for she thought Jane's growing gravity indicated incipient rebellion,) you will be ready to do every thing that is wanted of you."

Jane was summoning resolution to reply, when both her and her aunt's attention was called to a rustling at the window, and crazy Bet thrust her head in—

"Go on," said she, "and fill up the measure of your iniquities ; load her with burthens heavy and grievous to be borne, and do not touch them with one of your fingers.—There, Jane," said she, throwing her a bunch of carnations, "I have just come from the quarterly meeting, and I stopped as I came past your house, and picked these, for I thought their bright colors would be a temptation to the Quaker. And I thought too," said she, laughing, "there should be something to send up a sweet smelling savour from the altar where there are no deeds of mercy laid."

"Out of my yard instantly, you dirty beggar !" said Mrs. Wilson.

Bet turned, but not quickening her step, and went away, singing, "Glory, glory, hallelujah."

"Aunt," said Jane, "do not mind the poor creature. She does not mean to offend you. I believe she feels for me ; for she has been sheltered many a time from the cold and the storms in our house."

"Don't give yourself the least uneasiness, miss. I am not to be disturbed by a crazy woman ; but I do not see what occasion there is for her feeling for you. You have not yet answered me."

"I have no answer to make, ma'am," replied Jane, meekly, "but that I shall do my best to content you. I am very



young, and not much used to work, and I may have been too kindly dealt with ; but that is all over now."

"Do you mean, miss, to say, that I shan't treat you kindly?"

"No, aunt, but I meant——excuse me, if I meant any thing wrong."

"I did expect, miss, to hear some thankfulness expressed."

"I do, ma'am, feel grateful, that I have a shelter over my head ; what more I have to be grateful for, time must determine."

There was a dignity in Jane's manner, that, with the spirit of the reply, taught Mrs. Wilson that she had, in her niece, a very different subject to deal with from her own wilful and trickish children. "Well, Miss Jane, I shall expect no haughty airs in my house, and you will please now to tell the girls to be ready to go with me to the afternoon conference,\* and prepare yourself to go also. One more thing I have to say to you, you must never look to me for any clothing ; that cunning Mary has packed away enough to last you fifty years. With all her Methodism, I will trust her to feather your nest, and her own too."

"Alas !" thought Jane, as she went to execute her aunt's commission, "what good does it do my poor aunt to go to conference ?" Perhaps this question would not have occurred to many girls of thirteen ; but Jane had been accustomed to scan the motives of her conduct, and to watch for the fruit. The aid extended to our helpless orphan by her pharisaical aunt, reminds us of the "right of asylum" afforded by the ancients to the offenders who were allowed to take shelter in the temples of their gods, and suffered to perish there.

She found the girls very much indisposed to the afternoon

\* Meeting for conversation on religious topics.



meeting. Martha said she "would not go to hear Deacon Barton's everlasting prayers ; she had heard so many of them, she knew them all by heart."

Elvira had just got possession, by stealth, of a new novel ; that species of reading being absolutely prohibited in Mrs. Wilson's house, she had crept up to the garret, and was promising herself a long afternoon of stolen pleasure. " Oh, Jane," said she, " why can't you go down and tell mother you can't find me. Just tell her, you guess I have gone down to Miss Banker's, to inquire whether the tracts have come ; that's a good thought ;" and she was resuming her book, when seeing Jane did not move, she added, " I'll do as much for you any time."

" I shall never wish you to do as much for me, Elvira."

" I do not think it is so very much, just to go down stairs ; besides, Jane," she added, imperiously, " Mother says, you must do whatever we ask you to."

Elvira was so habituated to deceit, that it never occurred to her, that the falsehood was the difficult part of the errand to Jane ; and when Jane said, " Cousin Elvira, I will do whatever is reasonable for you, and no more ; any thing that is true, I will tell your mother for you," Elvira laughed in derision.

" Pooh, Jane, you have brought your strict notions to a poor market. It was easy enough to get along with the truth with your mother, because she would let you have your own way on all occasions ; but I can tell you, disguises are the only wear in our camp !"

" I shall not use them, Elvira. I should dread their being stripped off."

" Oh, not at all. Mother seldom takes the trouble to inquire into it ; and if she does, now and then, by accident,



detect it, the storm soon blows over. She has caught me in many a white lie, and black one too, and she has not been half so angry as when I have torn my frock, or lost a glove. Why, child, if you are going to fight your battles with mother with plain truth, you will find yourself without shield or buckler."

"Ah, Elvira!" replied Jane, smiling,

"That's no battle, ev'ry body knows,  
Where one side only gives the blows."

"That's true enough, Jane. Well, if you will not help me off from the conference, I must go. Sweet Vivaldi," said she, kissing her book, and carefully hiding it in a dark corner of the garret, "must I part with thee?"

"One would think," said Jane, "you were parting with your lover."

"I am, my dear. I always fancy, when I read a novel, that I am the heroine, and the hero is one of my favourites; and then I realize it all, and it appears so natural."

Elvira was not, at heart, an ill-natured girl; but having a weak understanding, and rather a fearful, unresisting temper, she had been driven by her mother's mode of treatment into the practice of deceit; and she being the weaker party, used in her warfare as many arts as a savage practises towards a civilized enemy. A small stock of original invention may be worked up into a vast deal of cunning. Elvira had been sent one quarter to a distant boarding-school, where her name had attracted a young lady, whose head had been turned by love-stories. They had formed a league of eternal friendship, which might have a six months' duration; and Elvira had returned to her home, at the age of sixteen, with a farrago of romance superadded to her home-bred duplicity.



Martha was two years older than her sister, and more like her mother: violent and self-willed, she openly resisted her mother's authority, whenever it opposed her wishes. From such companions, Jane soon found she had nothing to expect of improvement or pleasure; but, though it may seem quite incredible to some, she was not unhappy. The very labour her aunt imposed on her was converted into a blessing, for it occupied her mind, and saved her from brooding on the happy past, or the unhappy present. She now found exercise for the domestic talents Mary had so skilfully cultivated. Even the unrelenting Mrs. Wilson was once heard to say, with some apparent pleasure, that "Jane was gifted at all sorts of work." Her dexterous hand was often put in requisition by her idle and slatternly cousins, and their favour was sometimes won by her kind offices. But more than all, and above all, as a source of contentment and cheerfulness—better far than ever was boasted of perennial springs, or "Amreeta cups of immortality"—was Jane's unfailing habit of regulating her daily life by the sacred rules of our blessed Lord. She would steal from her bed at the dawn of day, when the songs of the birds were interpreting the stillness of nature, and beauty and fragrance breathing incense to the Maker, and join her devotions to the choral praise. At this hour she studied the word of truth and life, and a holy beam of light fell from it on her path through the day. Her pleasures at this social period of her life were almost all solitary, except when she was indulged in a visit to Mary, whose eye was continually watching over her with maternal kindness. The gayety of her childhood had been so sadly checked by the change of her fortunes, that her countenance had taken rather a serious and reserved cast. Mr. Lloyd's benevolent feelings were awakened by her appearance; and Mary, whose



chief delight was in expatiating on the character of her favourite, took care to confirm his favourable impressions, by setting in the broadest light her former felicity, her present trials, and her patience in tribulation.

Mary had orders to leave the furniture in a little room that had formerly been assigned to Jane, precisely as she left it, and to tell Jane that it was still called, and should be considered her room.

"And that beautiful honeysuckle, Jane," said Mr. Lloyd to her, "which thy tasteful hand has so carefully trained about the window, is still thine."

These, and many other instances of delicate attention from Mr. Lloyd, saved her from the feeling of forlornness that she might otherwise have suffered.



## CHAPTER V.

“I am for other, than for dancing measures.”

AS YOU LIKE IT.

A FEW months after Jane entered her aunt's family, an unusual commotion had been produced in the village of —— by an event of rare occurrence. This was no less than the arrival of a dancing-master, and the issuing of proposals for a dancing-school.

This was regarded by some very zealous persons as a *ruse de guerre* of the old Adversary, which, if not successfully opposed, would end in the establishment of his kingdom.

The plan of the disciple of Vestris, was to establish a chain of dancing-schools from one extremity of the country to the other; and this was looked upon as a mine which would be sprung to the certain destruction of every thing that was ‘virtuous and of good report.’ Some clergymen denounced the impending sin from their pulpits. One said, that he had searched the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and as he could not find a text that expressly rebuked that enormity, he was confirmed in a previous opinion that it was included in all general denunciations of sin! he said that dancing was



one of the most offensive of all the rites of those savage nations that were under the immediate and *visible* government of the prince of this world; and finally, he referred them to the church documents, those precious records of the piety, and wisdom, and faithfulness of their ancestors; and they would there find a rule which prohibited any church member from "frequenting, or being present at, a ball, or dance, or frolic, or any such assembly of Satan," and they would moreover find that such transgressions had been repeatedly punished by expulsion from the church, and exclusion from all christian ordinances. Some of this gentleman's brethren contented themselves by using their influence in private advice and remonstrance; and a few said they could not see the sin nor the danger of the young people's indulging, with moderation, in a healthful exercise and innocent recreation adapted to their season of life; that what the moral and pious Locke had strenuously advocated, and the excellent Watts approved, it did not become them to frown upon; but they should use their efforts in restraining the young people within the bounds of moderation.

The result was, that our dancing-master obtained a few schools and one in the village which enjoyed the privilege of Mrs. Wilson's light. She, filled with alarm, 'lifted up her voice and spared not.' Some of her warmest admirers thought her clamor had more of valor in it than discretion.

Notwithstanding the violence of the opposition, and perhaps aided by it, the dancing-school was at length fairly established, and some of the elderly matrons of the village, who had considered dances as the orgies of Satan, were heard to confess that, when properly regulated, they might furnish an amusement not altogether unsuited to youth, and that they did not, in point of propriety, suffer by a comparison



with the romps, forfeits, and cushion-dances of *their* younger days.

At Mrs. Wilson's instance, two new weekly meetings were appointed, on the same evenings with the dancing-school; the one to be a conference in the presence of the young people, and the other a catechetical lecture for them. These her daughters were compelled to attend, in spite of the bold and turbulent opposition of Martha, and the well-concerted artifices of Elvira.

Elvira expressed her surprise at Jane's patience under the new dispensation. "To be sure, Jane," she said, "you have not the trial that I have, about the dancing-school, for a poor girl can't expect such accomplishments.—I do so long to dance! It was in the mazy dance Edward Montreville first fell in love with Selina;—but then these odious—these hateful meetings! Oh, I have certainly a *natural* antipathy to them; you do not always have to attend them; mother is ready enough to let you off, when there is any hard job to be done in the family;—well, much as I hate work, I had rather work than go to meeting. Tell me honestly, Jane, would not you like to learn to dance, if you were not obliged to wear deep mourning, and could afford to pay for it?"

Jane, all used as she was to the coarseness of her cousins, would sometimes feel the colour come unbidden to her cheeks, and she felt them glow as she replied, "I learned to dance, Elvira, during the year I spent at Mrs. Benson's boarding-school."

"La, is it possible? I never heard you say a word about it."

"No," said Jane; "many things have happened to me that you never heard me say a word about."

"Oh! I dare say, Miss Jane. Every body knows your



cold, reserved disposition. My sensibility would destroy me, if I did not permit it to flow out into a sympathizing bosom."

"But now, Jane," said she, shutting the door, and lowering her voice, "I have hit upon a capital plan to cheat mother. There is to be a little ball to-night, after the school; and I have promised Edward Erskine to go with him to it. For once, Jane, be generous, and lend me a helping-hand. In the first place, to get rid of the meeting, I am going to put a flannel round my throat, to tell my mother it is very sore, and I have a head-ache; and then I shall go to bed; but as soon as she is well out of the house, I shall get up and dress me, and wind that pretty wreath of yours, which I'm sure you will lend me, around my head, and meet Erskine just at the pear-tree, at the end of the garden. Then, as to the return, you know you told mother you could not go to meeting, because you was going to stay with old Phillis, and I just heard the doctor say, he did not believe she would live the night through. This is clear luck, what mother would call providential. At any rate, you know, if she should not be any worse, you can sit up till 12 o'clock, and I will just tap at Phillis's bed-room window, and you won't refuse, Jane, to slip the bolt of the outside door for me."

Jane told her she could not take part in her projects; but Elvira, trusting to the impulse of her cousin's good-nature, adhered to her plan.

Mrs. Wilson was not, on this occasion, so keen-eyed as usual. She had, that very day, received proposals of marriage from a broken merchant; and though she had no idea of hazarding her estates and liberty, she was a good deal fluttered with what she would fain have believed to be a compliment to her personal charms. Every thing succeeded to Elvira's most sanguine expectations. Her mother went to the



conference. Elvira, arrayed in all the finery her own wardrobe supplied, and crowned with Jane's wreath, went off to meet her expecting gallant, leaving Jane by the bedside of Phillis; and there the sweet girl kindly watched alone, till after the return of the family from the conference, till after the bell had summoned the household to the evening prayer, and till after the last lingering sound of fastening doors, windows, &c., had died away.

The poor old invalid was really in the last extremity; her breathing grew shorter and more interrupted; her eyes assumed a fearful stare and glassiness. Jane's fortitude forsook her, and she ventured to call her aunt, who had but just entered the room, when the poor creature expired.

In the last struggle she grasped Jane's hand; and as her fingers released their hold, and the arm fell beside her, Jane raised it up, and gently laying it across her body, and retaining the hand for a moment in her own, she said, "Poor Phillis! how much hard work you have done with this hand, and how many kindnesses for me. Your troubles are all over now."

"You take upon you to say a great deal, Jane," replied her aunt. "Phillis did not give me satisfying evidence of a saving faith."

"But," said Jane, as if she did not quite comprehend the import of her aunt's remark, "Phillis was very faithful over her little."

"That's nothing to the purpose, Jane," answered Mrs. Wilson.

Jane made no reply, unless the tear she dropped on her old friend might be deemed one, and Mrs. Wilson added,

"Now, child, you must get the things together, to lay her out." Then saying, that Phillis's sickness had been a bill of



cost to her, and quite overlooking her long life of patient and profitable service, she gave the most sordid directions as to the selection of provisions for the last wants of the poor menial. Jane went out of the room to execute her orders.

She had scarcely gone, when Mrs. Wilson heard the window carefully raised, and some one said, "Here I am, Jane; go softly and slip the bolt of the west door, and don't for the world wake the old lady." By any brighter light than the dim night lamp that was burning on the hearth, Elvira could not have mistaken her dark harsh-visaged mother for her fair cousin. A single glance revealed the truth to Mrs. Wilson. The moonbeams were playing on the wreath of flowers, and Edward Erskine, who was known as the ringleader of the ball-faction, stood beside Elvira. She smothered her rage for a few moments, and creeping softly to the passage, opened the door, and admitted the rebel, who followed her to Phillis's room, saying, "Oh, Jane, you are a dear good soul for once. I have had an ecstatic time. Never try to persuade me not to play off a good trick on mother." By this time they had arrived at Phillis's room, where Jane had just entered with a candle in her hand.

Mrs. Wilson turned to her child, who stood confounded with the sudden detection. "I have caught you," said she, almost bursting with rage; "caught you both!" Then seizing the wreath of flowers, which she seemed to look upon as the hoisted flag of successful rebellion, she threw it on the floor, and crushing it with her foot, she grasped the terrified girl, and pushed her so violently that she fell on the cold body of the lifeless woman: "and you, viper!" continued the furious creature, turning to Jane, "is this my reward for warming you in my bosom? You, with your smooth, hypocritical face, teaching my child to deceive and abuse me. But you shall



have your reward. You shall see whether I am to be brow-beaten by a dependent child in my own house."

Jane had often seen her aunt angry, but she had never witnessed such passion as this, and she was for a moment confounded; but like a delicate plant that bends to the ground before a sudden gust of wind, and then is as erect as ever, she turned to Mrs. Wilson, and said, "Ma'am, I have never deceived, or aided others to deceive you."

"I verily believe you lie!" replied her aunt, in a tone of undiminished fury.

Jane looked to her cousin, who had recoiled from the cold body of Phillis, and sat in sullen silence on a trunk at the foot of the bed,—“Elvira,” said she, “you will do me the justice to tell your mother I had no part in your deception.” But Elvira, well pleased to have any portion of the storm averted from her own head, had not generosity enough to interpose the truth. She therefore compromised with her conscience, and merely said, “Jane knew I was going.”

“I was sure of it,—I was sure of it; I always knew she was an artful jade; ‘still waters run deep;’ but she shall be exposed; the mask shall be stripped from the hypocrite.”

“Aunt,” said Jane, in a voice so sweet, so composed, that it sounded like the breath of music following the howlings of an enraged animal; “Aunt, we are in the chamber of death; and in a little time you, and I, and all of us, shall be as this poor creature; as you will then wish your soul to be lightened of all injustice—spare the innocent now; you know I never deceived you; Elvira knows it: I am willing to bear any thing it pleases God to lay upon me, but I cannot have my good name taken, it is all that remains to me.”

This appeal checked Mrs. Wilson for a moment; she would have replied, but she was interrupted by two colored



women, whom she had sent for, to perform the last offices for Phillis. She restrained her passion, gave them the necessary directions, and withdrew to her own room, where, we doubt not, she was followed by the rebukes of her conscience; for however neglected and stifled, its 'still, small voice' will be heard in darkness and solitude.

It may seem strange, that Mrs. Wilson should have manifested such anxiety to throw the blame of this affair on Jane; but however a parent may seek, by every flattering unctious vanity can devise, to evade the truth, the misconduct of a child will convey a reproach, and reflect dishonor on the author of its existence.

Jane and Elvira crept to their beds without exchanging a single word. Elvira felt some shame at her own meanness; but levity and selfishness always prevailed in her mind, and she soon lost all consciousness of realities, and visions of dances and music and moonlight floated in her brain; sometimes 'a change came o'er the spirit of her dream,' and she shrunk from a violent grasp, and felt the icy touch of death; and wherever she turned, a ray from her cousin's mild blue eye fell upon her, and she could not escape from its silent reproach. The mother and the daughter might both have envied the repose of the solitary abused orphan, who possessed 'a peace they could not trouble.' She soon lost all memory of her aunt's rage and her cousin's injustice, and sunk into quiet slumbers. In her dream she saw her mother tenderly smiling on her; and heard again and again the last words of the old woman: "the Lord bless you, Miss Jane! the Lord will bless you, for your kindness to old Phillis."

If Mrs. Wilson had not been blinded by self-love, she might have learnt an invaluable lesson from the melancholy results of her own mal-government; but she preferred incur-



ring every evil, to the relinquishment of one of the prerogatives of power. Her children, denied the appropriate pleasures of youth, were driven to sins of a much deeper dye than those which Mrs. Wilson sought to avoid could have had, even in her eyes ; for surely the very worst effects that ever were attributed to dancing, or to romance-reading, cannot equal the secret dislike of a parent's authority, the risings of the heart against a parent's tyranny, and the falsehood and meanness that weakness always will employ in the evasion of power ; and than which nothing will more certainly taint every thing that is pure in the character.

The cool reflection of the morning pointed out to Mrs. Wilson, as the most discreet, the very line of conduct justice would have dictated. She knew she could not accuse Jane, without exposing Elvira, and besides, she did not care to have it known that her sagacity had been outwitted by these children. Therefore, though she appeared at breakfast more sulky and unreasonable than usual, she took no notice of the transactions of the preceding night, and they remained secret to all but the actors in them ; except that we have reason to believe, from Mr. Lloyd's increased attention to Jane, shortly after, that they had been faithfully transmitted to him by Mary Hull, the balm of whose sympathy it cannot be deemed wonderful our little solitary should seek.



## CHAPTER VI.

These are fine feathers, but what bird were they plucked from?

ESOP.

THERE is nothing in New England so eagerly sought for, or so highly prized by all classes of people, as the advantages of education. A farmer and his wife will deny themselves all other benefits that might result from the gains that have accrued to them from a summer of self-denial and toil, to give their children the *privilege* of a grammar-school during the winter. The public, or as they are called, the *town-schools*, are open to the child of the poorest laborer. As knowledge is one of the best helps and most certain securities to virtue, we doubtless owe a great portion of the morality of this blessed region, where there are no dark corners of ignorance, to these wise institutions of our pious ancestors.

In the fall subsequent to the events we have recorded, a school had been opened in the village of ———, of a higher and more expensive order, than is common in a country town. Every mouth was filled with praises of the new teacher, and with promises and expectations of the knowledge to be derived from this newly opened fountain; all was bustle and preparation among the young companions of Martha and Elvira for the school; for Martha, though beyond the usual



school-going age, was to complete her education at the new seminary.

The dancing-school had passed without a sigh of regret from Jane ; but now she felt severely her privation. Her watchful friend, Mary Hull, remarked the melancholy look that was unheeded at her aunt's ; and she inquired of Jane, " Why she was so downcast ? "

" Ah, Mary ! " she replied, " it is a long time since I have felt the merry spirit which the wise man says, is ' medicine to the heart. ' "

" That's true, Jane ; but then there's nobody, that is, there's nobody that has so little reason for it as you have, that has a more cheerful look. "

" I have great reason to be cheerful, Mary, in token of gratitude for my kind friends here ; and, " added she, taking Mr. Lloyd's infant, who playfully extended her arms to her, " you and I are too young, Rebecca, to be very sad. " The child felt the tear that dewed the cheek to which she was pressed, and looking into Jane's face, with instinctive sympathy, burst into tears. Mr. Lloyd entered at this moment, and Jane hastily replacing the child in Mary Hull's lap, and tying on her hat, bade them farewell.

Mr. Lloyd asked for some explanation. Mary believed nothing particular had happened. " But, " she said, " the poor girl's spirit wearies with the life she leads ; it's a *chore* to live with Mrs. Wilson—a great change from a home and mother, to such a work-house and such a task-woman. "

Mr. Lloyd had often regretted, that it was so little in his power to benefit Jane. The school occurred to him ; and as nothing was more improbable than that Mrs. Wilson would, herself, incur the expense of Jane's attendance, he consulted with Mary as to the best mode of doing it himself, without



provoking Mrs. Wilson's opposition, or offending her pride. A few days after, when the agent for the school presented the subscription list to Mrs. Wilson for her signature, she saw there, to her utter astonishment, Jane Elton's name. The agent handed her an explanatory note from Mr. Lloyd, in which he said, "that as it had been customary to send one person from the house he now occupied to the 'subscription school,' he had taken the liberty to continue the custom. He hoped the measure would meet with Mrs. Wilson's approbation, without which it could not go into effect."

Mrs. Wilson, at first, said it was impossible; she could not spare Jane; but afterwards, she consented to take it into consideration. The moment the man had shut the door, she turned to Jane, and misunderstanding the flush of pleasure that brightened her usually pale face, she exclaimed, "And so, Miss, this is one of your plans to slip your neck out of the yoke of duty."

Jane said she had nothing to do with the plan; but she trusted her aunt would not oblige her to lose such a golden opportunity of advantage. Mrs. Wilson made various objections, and Jane skilfully obviated them all. At last she said, "There would be a piece of linen to make up for David, and that put it quite out of the question, for," said she, "I shall not take the girls from their studies; and even you, Miss Jane, will probably have the grace to think my time more precious than yours."

"Well, aunt," said Jane, with a smile so sweet, that even Mrs. Wilson could not entirely resist its influence, "if I will get the linen made by witch or fairy, may I go?"

"Why, yes," replied her aunt; "as you cannot get it made without witches or fairies, I may safely say you may."

Jane's reliance was on kindness more potent than magic;



and that very evening, with the light-bounding step of hope, she went to her friend Mary's, where, after having made her acknowledgments to Mr. Lloyd with the grace of earnestness and sincerity, she revealed to Mary the only obstacle that now opposed her wishes. Mary at once, as Jane expected, offered to make the linen for her; and Jane, affectionately thanking her, said, she was sure her aunt would be satisfied, for she had often heard her say, "Mary Hull was the best needlewoman in the county."

Mrs. Wilson had seen Jane so uniformly flexible and submissive to her wilful administration, and in matters she deemed of vastly more consequence than six months' schooling, that she was all astonishment to behold her now so persevering in her resolution to accomplish her purpose. But Jane's and Mrs. Wilson's estimate of the importance of any given object was very different. The same fortitude that enabled Jane to bear, silently and patiently, the "oppressor's wrong," nerved her courage in the attainment of a good end.

Mrs. Wilson had no longer any pretence to oppose Jane's wishes; and the following day she took her place, with her cousins, at Mr. Evertson's school. Her education had been very much advanced for her years; so that, though four years younger than Martha Wilson, she was, after a very careful examination by the teacher, classed with her. This was a severe mortification to Martha's pride; she seemed to feel her cousin's equality an insult to herself, and when she reported the circumstance to her mother, she said, she believed it was all owing to Jane's soft answers and pretty face; or "may be the quaker, who takes such a mighty fancy to Jane, has bribed Mr. Evertson."

"Very likely, very likely," answered her mother. "It seems as if every body took that child's part against us."



Jane, once more placed on even ground with her companions, was like a spring relieved from a pressure. She entered on her new pursuits with a vigor that baffled the mean attempts of the family at home to impede or hinder her course. She was not a genius, but she had that eager assiduity, that "patient attention," to which the greatest of philosophers attributed the success which has been the envy and admiration of the world. There was a perpetual sunshine in her face, that delighted her patron. He had thought nothing could be more interesting than Jane's pensive, dejected expression; but he now felt, that it was beautiful as well as natural for the young plant to expand its leaves to the bright rays of the sun, and to rejoice in its beams. Mary Hull was heard to say, quite as often as the beauty of the expression would justify, "the Lord be thanked, Jane once more wears the cheerfulness of countenance that betokens a heart in prosperity."

Double duties were laid on Jane at home, but she won her way through them. The strict rule of her aunt's house did not allow her to "watch with the constellations," but she "made acquaintance with the gray dawn," and learnt by "employing them well," (the mode recommended by Elizabeth Smith,) the value of minutes as well as hours. The bad envied her progress, the stupid were amazed at it, and the generous delighted with it. She went, rejoicing on her way, far before her cousins, who, stung by her manifest superiority, made unwonted exertions; and Martha might have fairly competed with her for the prizes that were to be given, had she not often been confused and obstructed by the perversities of her temper.

The winter and the spring winged their rapid flight. The end of the term, which was to close with an exhibition, ap-



proached. The note of busy preparation was heard in every dwelling in the village of ———. We doubt if the expectation of the tournament at Ashby de la Zouche excited a greater sensation among knights-templars, Norman lords, and Saxon 'churls,' than the anticipation of the exhibition produced upon the young people of ———. Labor and skill were employed and exhausted in preparations for the event. One day was allotted for the examination of the scholars, and the distribution of prizes for the *exhibition*, during which the young men and boys were to display those powers that were developing for the pulpit, and the bar, and the political harangue. The young ladies were with obvious and singular propriety excluded from any part in the exhibition, except that on the first drawing *aside*, (for they did not know enough of the scenic art to draw *up* the curtain,) the prize composition was to be read by the writer of it.

The old and the young seemed alike interested in promoting the glories of the day. The part of a king, from one of Miss Moore's Sacred Dramas, was to be enacted, and there was a general assembly of the girls of the village to fit his royal trappings. A purple shawl was converted by a little girl of ready invention into a royal robe of Tyrian dye. The crown blazed with jewelry, which to too curious scrutiny appeared to be not diamonds, but paste; not gold, but gold-leaf, and gold beads; of which fashionable New England necklace, as tradition goes, there were not less than sixty strings, lent for the occasion by the kind old ladies of the village. An antiquated belle who had once flourished in the capital, completed the decoration of the crown by four nodding ostrich plumes, whose 'bend did certainly awe the world' of ———. There might have been some want of congruity in the regalia,



but this was not marked by the critics of ———, as not one of the republican audience had ever seen a *real crown*.

A meeting was called of the trustees of the school, and the meeting-house (for thus in the land of the Puritans the churches are still named,) was assigned as the place of exhibition. In order not to invade the seriousness of the sanctuary, the pieces to be spoken were all to be of a moral or religious character. Instrumental music, notwithstanding the celebrations of Independence in the same holy place were pleaded as a precedent, was rigorously forbidden. The arrangements were made according to these decrees, from which there was no appeal, and neither, as usually happens with inevitable evils, was there much dissatisfaction. One of the boys remarked, that he wondered the deacons (three of the trustees were deacons), did not stop the birds from singing, and the sun from shining, and all such gay sounds and sights. Oh that those, who throw a pall over the innocent pleasures of life, and give, in the eye of the young, to religion a dark and gloomy aspect, would learn some lessons of theology from the joyous light of the sun, and the merry carol of the birds!

A floor was laid over the tops of the pews, which was covered by a carpet lent by the kind Mr. Lloyd. A chair, a present from Queen Anne to the first missionary to the Housatonic Indians, and which, like some other royal gifts, had cost more than it came to, in its journey from the coast to the mountainous interior, furnished a very respectable throne, less mutable than some that have been filled by real kings, for it remained a fixture in the middle of the stage, while kings were deposed and kingdoms overthrown. Curtains, of divers colors and figures, were drawn in a cunningly devised manner, from one end of the church to the other.



The day of *examination* came, and our deserving young heroine was crowned with honours, which she merited so well, and bore so meekly, that she had the sympathy of the whole school—except that (for the truth must be told) of her envious cousins. When the prizes for arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, and philosophy were, one after another, in obedience to the award of the examiners, delivered to Jane by her gratified master, Martha Wilson burst into tears of spite and mortification, and Elvira whispered to the young lady next her, “She may have her triumph now, but I will have one worth a hundred prizes to-morrow, for I am sure that my composition will be preferred to hers.”

To add the zest of curiosity and surprise to the exhibition, it had been determined that the writer of the successful piece should not be known till the withdrawing of the curtain disclosed the secret. The long expected day arrived. One would have thought, from the wagons and chaises that poured in from the neighbouring towns, that a cattle show, or a hanging, or some such “merry-making matter,” was going on in the village of ———. The church was filled at an early hour; and pews, aisles, and galleries crowded as we have seen a less holy place at the first appearance of a foreign actor. The teacher and the clergyman were in the pulpit; the scholars ranged on benches at the opposite extremities of the stage; the crowd was hushed into reverent stillness while the clergyman commenced the exercises of the day by an appropriate prayer. The curtains were hardly closed, before they were again withdrawn, and the eager eyes of the assembly fell on Elvira. A shadow of disappointment might have been seen flitting across Mr. Lloyd’s face at this moment, while Mary Hull, who sat in a corner of the gallery, half rose from her seat, sat down again, tied and untied her bon-



net, and, in short, manifested indubitable signs of disappointment and vexation ; signs, that in more charitable eyes than Mrs. Wilson's certainly would have gone against the obnoxious doctrine of "perfection." Elvira was seated on the throne, ambitiously arrayed in a bright scarlet Canton crape frock, and a white sarcenet scarf fantastically thrown over her shoulders. Her hair, in imitation of some favourite heroine, flowed in ringlets over her neck, excepting a single braid, with which, as she fancied, "*à la Grecque*," she had encompassed her brow ; and, to add to this confusion of the classical and the pastoral orders, instead of the crescent of Diana in the model ; she had bound her braid with blue glass beads.

"Who is that ? who is that ?" was whispered from one to another.

"The rich widow Wilson's daughter," the strangers were answered.

Mrs. Wilson, whose maternal pride was swollen by the consciousness of triumph over Jane, nodded and whispered to all within her hearing, "My daughter, sir—my daughter, ma'am ; you see by the bill, the prize composition is to be spoken by the writer of it."

Elvira rose and advanced. She had requested that she might speak instead of reading her piece, and she spouted it with all the airs and graces of a self-elected heroine. When she dropped her courtesy, and returned to her companions, her usually high colour was heightened by the pride of success, and the pleasure of display. Some were heard to say, "She is a beauty ;" while others shook their heads, and observed, "The young lady must have great talents to write such a piece, but she looked too bold to please them."

Before the busy hum of comment had died away, an old



man, with a bald head, a keen eye, and a very good-humoured face, rose and said, "he would make bold to speak a word; bashfulness was suitable to youth, but was not necessary to gray hairs: he was kind o' loath to spoil a young body's pleasure, but he must own he did not like to see so much flourish in borrowed plumes; that, if he read the notice right, the young woman was to speak a piece of her own framing; he had no fault to find with the speaking; she spoke as smart as a lawyer; but he knew them words as well as the catechism, and if the schoolmaster or the minister would please to walk to his house, which was hard by, they might read them out of an old Boston newspaper, that his woman, who had been dead ten years come Independence, had pasted up by the side of his bed to keep off the rheumatis."

The old man sat down; and Mr. Evertson, who had all along been a little suspicious of foul play, begged the patience of the audience, while he himself could make the necessary comparison. Mrs. Wilson, conscious of the possession of a file of old Boston papers, and well knowing the plagiary was but too probable, fidgeted from one side of the pew to the other; and the conscience-stricken girl, on the pretence of being seized with a violent toothache, left the church.

The teacher soon returned, and was very sorry to be obliged to say, that the result of the investigation had been unfavourable to the young lady's integrity, as the piece had, undoubtedly, been copied, verbatim, from the original essay in the Boston paper.

"He hoped his school would suffer no discredit from the fault of an individual. He should now, though the young lady had remonstrated against being brought forward under such circumstances, insist on the composition being read which had been pronounced next best to Miss Wilson's, and



which, he could assure the audience, was, unquestionably, original."

The curtain was once more withdrawn, and discovered Jane seated on the throne, looking like the "meek usurper," reluctant to receive the greatness that was thrust upon her. She presented a striking contrast to the deposed sovereign. She was dressed in a plain black silk frock, and a neatly plaited muslin vandyke; her rich light brown hair was parted on her forehead, and confined by a handsome comb, around which one of her young friends had twisted an "od'rous chaplet of sweet summer buds." She advanced with so embarrassed an air, that even Mary Hull thought her triumph cost more than it was worth. As she unrolled the scroll she held in her hand, she ventured once to raise her eyes; she saw but one face among all the multitude—the approving, encouraging smile of her kind patron met her timid glance, and emboldened her to proceed, which she did, in a low and faltering voice, that certainly lent no grace, but the grace of modesty, to the composition. The subject was gratitude, and the remarks, made on the virtue, were such as could only come from one whose heart was warmed by its glow. Mr. Lloyd felt the delicate praise. Mrs. Wilson affected to appropriate it to herself. She whispered to her next neighbour, "It is easy to write about gratitude; but I am sure her conduct is unthankful enough."

As Jane returned to her seat, her face brightened with the relief of having got through. Edward Erskine exclaimed to the young man next him, "By Jove, it is the most elegant composition I ever heard from a girl. Jane Elton has certainly grown very handsome."

"Yes," replied his friend; "I always thought her pretty, but you prefer her cousin."

"I did prefer her cousin," answered Erskine; "but I



never noticed Jane much before ; she is but a child, and she has always looked so pale and so sad since the change in her family. You know I have no fancy for solemn looks. Elvira is certainly handsome—very handsome ; she is a cheating little devil ; but, for all that, she is gay, and spirited, and amusing. It is enough to make one give one's self to little artifices and deceits to live with such a stern, churlish woman as Mrs. Wilson. The girl has infinite ingenuity in cheating her mother, and her pretty face covers a multitude of faults."

"So I should think," replied his friend, "from the character you have given her. You will hardly applaud the deceits that have led to the disgrace of this morning."

"Oh, no !" answered Erskine ; "but I am sorry for her mortification."

The exhibition proceeded ; but as our heroine had no further concern with it, neither have we ; except to say, that it was equally honourable to the preceptor and pupils. The paraphernalia of the king was exceedingly admired, and some were heard to observe (very justly), that they did not believe Solomon, in all his glory, was arrayed like him !

Jane's situation, at her aunt's, was rendered more painful than ever, from the events of the school and the exhibition. Mrs. Wilson treated her with every species of vexatious unkindness. In vain Jane tried, by her usefulness to her aunt, to win her favour, and by the most patient obedience to her unreasonable commands, by silent uncomplaining submission, to soothe her into kindness. It was all in vain ; her aunt was more oppressive than ever, Martha more rude, and Elvira more tormenting. It was not hearing her called "the just," that provoked their hatred ; but it was the keen and most disagreeable feeling of self-reproach that stung them, when the light of her goodness fell upon their evil deeds : it was the "daily beauty of her life that made them ugly."



## CHAPTER VII.

Poise the cause in justice's equal scales,  
Whose beam stands sure.

2 HENRY VI.

JANE hoped for some favourable change in her condition, or some slight alleviation of it, from the visit of David Wilson, who had just arrived from college, to pass a six-weeks' vacation with his family. At first, he seemed to admire his cousin; and partly to gratify a passing fancy, and partly from opposition to his mother and sisters, he treated her with particular attention. Jane was grateful, and returned his kindness with frankness and affection. But she was soon obliged, by the freedom of his manners, to treat him with reserve. His pride was wounded, and he joined the family league against her. He was a headstrong youth of eighteen; his passions had been curbed by the authority of his mother, but never tamed; and now that he was beyond her reach, he was continually falling into some excess; almost always in disgrace at college, and never in favour.

Mr. Lloyd was made acquainted with the embarrassments in Jane's condition, by Mary Hull. He would have rejoiced to have offered Jane a home, but he had no right to interfere; he was a stranger, and he well knew that Mrs. Wilson would



not consent to any arrangement that would deprive her of Jane's ill-requited services,—such services as money could not purchase.

It was, too, about this period, that Mr. Lloyd went, for the first time, to visit Philadelphia. Jane had passed a day of unusual exertion, and just at the close of it she obtained her aunt's reluctant leave to pay a visit to Mary Hull. It was a soft summer evening: the valley reposed in deep shadow; the sun was sinking behind the western mountains, tinging the light clouds with a smiling farewell ray, and his last beams lingering on the summits of the eastern mountain, as if "parting were sweet sorrow." Jane's spirits rose elastic, as she breathed the open air; she felt like one who has just issued from a close, pent-up, sick room, and inspires the fresh pure breath of morning; she was gayly tripping along, sending an involuntary response to the last notes of the birds that were loitering on "bush and brake," when Edward Erskine joined her; she had often seen him at her aunt's, but, regarding him as the companion of her cousins, she had scarcely noticed him, or had been noticed by him. He joined her, saying, "It is almost too late to be abroad without a companion."

"I am used," replied Jane, "to be without a companion, and I do not need one."

"But, I hope you do not object to one? It would be one of the miseries of human life, to see such a girl as Jane Elton walking alone, and not be permitted to join her."

"Sir?" said Jane, confounded by Edward's unexpected gallantry.

Abashed by her simplicity, he replied, "that he was going to walk, and should be very happy to attend her."

Jane felt kindness, though she knew not how to receive



gallantry. She thanked him, and they walked on together. When Edward parted from her, he wondered he had never noticed before how very interesting she was, "and what a sweet expression she has when she smiles; and, oh!" added he, with a rapture quite excusable in a young man of twenty, "her eye is in itself a soul."

"Jane," said Mary Hull to her, as she entered her room, you look as bright as a May morning, and I have that to tell you, that will make you yet brighter. Mr. Evertson has been here, inquiring for Mr. Lloyd. I had my surmises, that it was something about you, and though Mr. Lloyd was gone, I was determined to find out; and so I made bold to break the ice, and say something about the exhibition, and how much Mr. Lloyd was pleased with the school, &c., &c.—and then he said, he was quite disappointed to find Mr. Lloyd gone; he wanted to consult him about a matter of great importance to himself and to you. Mr. Lloyd was so kind, he said, and had shown such an interest in the school, that he did not like to take any important step without consulting him; and then he spoke very handsomely of those elegant globes that Mr. Lloyd presented to the school. He said, his subscription was so much enlarged, that he must engage an assistant; but, as he wished to purchase some maps, he must get one who could furnish, at least, one hundred dollars. His sick wife and large family, he said, consumed nearly all his profits; and last, and best of all, Jane, he said, that you was the person he should prefer of all others for an assistant."

"Me!" exclaimed Jane.

"Yes, my dear child, you. I told him you was not quite fifteen; but he said, you knew more than most young wo-



men of twenty, and almost all the school loved and respected you."

"But, Mary, Mary," and the bright flush of pleasure died away as she spoke, "where am I to get a hundred dollars?"

"Mr. Lloyd," answered Mary, "I know would furnish it."

"No, Mary," replied Jane, after a few moments' consideration, "I never can consent to that."

"But why?" said Mary. "Mr. Lloyd spends all his money in doing good."

Jane could not tell why, but she felt that it was not delicate to incur such an obligation. She merely said, "Mr. Lloyd's means are well employed. If any man does, he certainly will, hear those blessed words, 'I was hungry and ye fed me, naked and ye clothed me, sick and in prison, and ye visited me.'"

"I do not eat the bread of idleness, Mary; I think I earn all my aunt gives me; and I am not very unhappy there; indeed, I am seldom unhappy. I cannot tell how it is, but I am used to their ways. I am always busy, and have not time to dwell on their unkindness; it passes me like the tempest from which I am sheltered; and when I feel my temper rising, I remember who it is that has placed me in the fiery furnace, and I feel, Mary, strengthened and peaceful as if an angel were really walking beside me."

"Surely," said Mary, as if but thinking aloud, "The kingdom is come in this dear child's heart."

Both were silent for a few moments. Jane was making a strong mental effort to subdue that longing after liberty, that lurks in every heart. Habitual discipline had rendered it comparatively easy for her to restrain her wishes. After a short struggle, she said, with a smile, "I am sure of one thing,



my dear, kind Mary, I shall never lose an opportunity of advantage, while I have such a watchful friend as you are, on the look-out for me. Oh! how much have I to be grateful for! I had no reason to expect such favor from Mr. Evertson. Every one, out of my aunt's family, is kind to me; I have no right to repine at the trials I have there; they are, no doubt, necessary to me. Mary, I sometimes feel the rising of a pride in my heart, that I am sure needs all these lessons of humility; and sometimes I feel, that I might be easily tempted to do wrong—to indulge an indolent disposition, for which you often reproved me; but I am compelled to exertion, by necessity as well as a sense of duty. It is good for me to bear this yoke in my youth."

"No doubt, no doubt, my dear child; but then you know if there is a way of escape opened to you, it would be but a tempting of Providence not to avail yourself of it. It is right to endure necessary evils with patience, but I know no rule that forbids your getting rid of them, if you can." Mary Hull was not a woman to leave any stone unturned, when she had a certain benefit in view for her favourite. "Now, dear Jane," said she, "I have one more plan to propose to you, and though it will cost you some pain, I think you will finally see it in the same light that I do. I always thought it was not for nothing Providence moved the hearts of the creditors to spare you all your dear mother's clothes, seeing she had a good many that could not be called necessary; nor was it a blind chance that raised you up such a friend as Mr. Lloyd in a stranger. Now, if you will consent to it, I will undertake to dispose of the articles Mr. Lloyd sent to you, and your mother's lace and shawls, and all the little nick-nacks she left; it shall go hard but I will raise a hundred dollars."

"But, Mary," said Jane, wishing, perhaps, to conceal from



herself even the involuntary reluctance she felt to the proposal, "Aunt Wilson will never consent to it."

"The consent that is not asked," replied Mary, "cannot be refused. It is but speaking to Mr. Evertson, and he will keep our counsel, for he is not a talking body, and when all is ready, it will be time enough, not to ask Mrs. Wilson's leave, but to tell her your plans; you owe her nothing, my child, unless it be for keeping the furnace hot that purifies the gold. I would not make you discontented with your situation, but I cannot bear to see your mind as well as your body in slavery."

Mary's long harangue had given Jane a moment for reflection, and she now saw the obvious benefits to result from the adoption of her judicious friend's plan. The real sorrows that had shaded her short life, had taught her not to waste her sensibility on trifles. She doubtless felt it to be very painful to part with any memorials of her mother, but the moment she was convinced it was right and best she should do so, she consented, and cheerfully, to the arrangement. Mary entered immediately upon the execution of her plan.

Those who have been accustomed to use, and to waste, thousands, will smile with contempt at the difficulty of raising a hundred dollars. But let those persons be reduced to want so mean a sum, and they will cease to laugh at the obstacles in the way of getting it. Certain it is, that Mary, anxious and assiduous, spent four weeks in industrious application to those whom she thought most likely to be purchasers in the confined market of —. The necessity of secrecy increased the difficulty of the transaction; but finally, zeal and perseverance mastered every obstacle, and Mary, with sparkling eyes, and a face that smiled all over in spite of its habitual sobriety, put Jane in possession of the hundred dollars.



"This is indeed manna in the wilderness," said Jane, as she received it, "but, dear Mary, I am not the less thankful to you for your exertions for me."

"My child you are right," replied Mary; "thanks should first ascend to Heaven, and then they are very apt to descend in heavenly grace upon the feeble instrument. But something seems to trouble you."

"I am troubled," answered Jane; "I fear, Mary, this sum cannot all have come from the articles you sold; you have added some of your earnings."

"No, my dear child; some, and all of my earnings, would I gladly give to you, but you know my poor blind sister takes all I can earn; while God blesses me with health, she shall never want. The town has offered to take her off my hands, as they call it, but this would be a crying shame to me; and besides," she added smiling, "I can't spare her, for it is more pleasant working for her than for myself. Thanks to Mr. Lloyd, she is now placed in a better situation than I could afford for her. No, Jane, the money is all yours; I have told Mr. Evertson, and you are to enter the school on Monday, and I have engaged a place for you at Mrs. Harvey's, who will be as kind as a mother to you. Between now and Monday you will have time to acquaint your aunt with the fortune you have come to, and to shed all the tears that are necessary on this woful occasion!"

Jane had now nothing to do but to communicate these arrangements; but so much did she dread the tempest she knew the intelligence would produce, that she suffered the day to wear away without opening her lips on the subject. The next day arrived; the time of emancipation was so near, she felt her spirits rise equal to the disagreeable task. The family were assembled in the 'dwelling room;' Mrs. Wilson was



engaged in casting up with her son David some of his college accounts, a kind of business that never increased her good humour. Martha and Elvira were seated at a window, in a warm altercation about the piece of work on which they were sewing; the point of controversy seemed to be—to which the mother had assigned the task of finishing it. The two younger children were sitting on little chairs near their mother, learning a long lesson in the ‘Assembly’s Catechism,’ and every now and then crying out—“Please to speak to David, ma’am, he is pinching me;”—“David pulled my hair, ma’am.” The complainants either received no notice, or an angry rebuke from the mother. Jane was quietly sewing, and mentally resolving that she would speak on the dreaded subject the moment her aunt had finished the business at which she was engaged. Mrs. Wilson’s temper became so much ruffled that she could not understand the accounts; so shuffling the papers altogether into her desk, and turning the key, she said angrily to her son, ‘her eldest hope,’ “You will please to bear in mind, sir, that all these extravagant bills are charged to you, and shall come out of your portion—not a cent of them will I ever pay.”

This did not seem to be a very propitious moment for Jane’s communication, but she dreaded it so much, that she felt impatient to have it off her mind, and laying down her work, she was fearfully beginning, when she was interrupted by a gentle tap at the door. A mean-looking woman entered, who bore the marks of poverty, and sorrow, and sickness. She had a pale, half-starved infant in her arms, and two other little ragged children with her, that she had very considerably left at the outer door. She curtsied very humbly to the lady of the house—‘hoped no offence’—she had a little business with *Miss Wilson*—she believed *Miss Wilson* had



forgotten her, it was no wonder—she did not blame her, sickness and trouble made great changes. Mrs. Wilson either did not, or affected not to recognize her. She was aware that old acquaintance might create a claim upon her charity, and she did not seem well pleased when Jane, who sat near, pushed a chair forward for the poor woman, into which she sunk, as it appeared, from utter inability to stand.

“Who do you say you are?” said Mrs. Wilson, after embarrassing the woman by an unfeeling stare.

“I did not say, ma’am, for I thought, may be, when you looked at me so severe, you would know me.”

“Let me take your baby, while you rest a little,” said Jane.

“Oh miss, he is not fit for you to take, he has had a dreadful spell with the whooping-cough and the measles, and they have left him kind-o’ sore and rickety; he has not looked so chirk as he does to-day since we left Buffalo.” Jane persisted in her kind offer, and the woman turned again to Mrs. Wilson—“Can’t you call to mind, ma’am, Polly Harris, that lived five years at your brother Squire Elton’s?”

“Yes, yes, I recollect you now; but you married and went away; and people should get their victuals where they do their work.”

“I did not come to beg,” replied the woman.

“That may be,” said Mrs. Wilson; “but it is a very poor calculation for the people that move into the new countries to come back upon us as soon as they meet with any trouble. I wonder our Select Men don’t take it in hand.”

“Ah! ma’am!” said the woman, “I guess you was never among strangers; never knew what it was to long to see your own people. Oh it is a heart-sickness, that seems to wear away life!”



"Whether I was, or was not, I don't know what that signifies to you; I should be glad to know what your business is with me, if you have any, which I very much doubt."

"I am afraid, ma'am, you will not see fit to make it your business," said the poor woman; and she sighed deeply, and hesitated, as if she was discouraged from proceeding, but the piteous condition of her children stimulated her courage. "Well, ma'am, to begin with the beginning of my troubles, as I was saying, I lived five years with your brother."

"Troubles!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilson, "you had an easy life enough of it there; you was always as plump as a partridge, and your cheeks as red as a rose!"

"I had nothing to complain of but that I could never get my pay when I wanted it. There never was a nicer woman than *Miss Elton*. I believe she saved my life once when I had the *typus* fever; but then every body knew she never had the use of much money; she never seemed to care any thing about it—when she had any I could always get it; I hope no offence, but every body knows the Squire was always a scheming, and seldom had the money ready to pay his just debts. I am afraid the child tires you, miss;" she continued, turning to Jane, who had walked to the window to hide the emotion the woman's remarks produced.

"No," replied Jane, "I had rather keep it;" and the woman proceeded—

"It lacked but six weeks of the five years I had lived at the Squire's, when I was married to Rufus Winthrop. When Rufus came to a settlement with the Squire, there was a hundred dollars owing to me. We were expecting to move off at a great distance, beyond the Genesee, and Rufus pressed very hard for the payment: the Squire put him off from time to time: Rufus was a peaceable man, and did not



want to go to law, and so the upshot of it was, the Squire persuaded him to to take his note—

“That’s a very likely story,” said Mrs. Wilson, impatiently interrupting the narrative—“I don’t believe one word of it.”

“Well, ma’am,” replied Mrs. Winthrop, “I have that which must convince you;” and she took from an old pocket book a small piece of paper, and handed it to Mrs. Wilson—“there is the identical note, ma’am, you can satisfy yourself.”

Jane cast her eye on the slip of paper in her aunt’s hand; it was but too plainly written in her father’s large and singular character. Mrs. Wilson coldly returned it, saying, in a moderate tone, “It is as good to you now as a piece of white paper.”

“Then I have nothing in this world,” said the poor woman, bursting into tears; “but my poor sick, destitute children.”

“How came you in such a destitute condition?” inquired Mrs. Wilson, who, now that she saw the woman had no direct claim on her, was willing to hear her story.

“Oh,” answered the poor creature, “it seemed as if every thing went cross-grained with us. There was never a couple went into the new countries with fairer prospects; Rufus had tugged every way to save enough to buy him a small farm. When we got to Buffalo, we struck down south, and settled just on the edge of Lake Erie. We had a yoke of oxen, but one of them was pretty much beat out on the road, and died the very day after we got to our journey’s end: there was a distemper among the cattle the next winter, and we lost the other ox and our cow. In the spring, Rufus took the long ague, working out in the swampy ground in wet weather, and



that held him fifteen months ; but he had made some clearings, and we worried through ; and for three years we seemed to be getting along ahead a little. Then we both took the lake fever : we had neither doctor nor nurse : our nighest neighbors were two miles off ; they were more forehanded than we, and despert kind, but it was not much they could do, for they had a large sick family of their own. The fever threw my poor husband into a slow consumption, and he died, ma'am, the 20th of last January, and that poor baby was born the next week after he died. It seemed as if nothing could kill me, though I have a weakness in my bones 'casioned by the fever, and distress of mind, that I expect to carry to my grave with me. Sometimes my children and I would almost starve to death ; but Providence always sent some relief. Once there was a missionary put up with us ; he looked like a poor body, but he left me two dollars ; and once a Roman Catholic priest that was passing over into Canada, gave me a gold piece, and that I saved, till I started on my journey. While my husband was sick, he had great consarn upon his mind about Squire Elton's note ; we had heard rumours like that he had broke ; but Rufus nor I could not believe but what there would be enough to pay the note, out of all his grandeur, and so Rufus left it in strict charge with me to come back as soon as I could after the spring opened. And so, ma'am, as soon as the roads were a little settled, I pulled up stakes and came off. My good christian neighbours helped me up to Buffalo. I have been nine weeks getting from there, though I was favoured with a great many rides"—

Here Mrs. Wilson interrupted the unfortunate narrator, saying,—“ I cannot see what occasion there was for you to be nine weeks on the road ; I have known persons to go from Boston to the Falls, and back again, in three weeks.”



"Ah, ma'am!" replied the woman, "there is a sight of difference between a gentleman riding through the country for pleasure, with plenty of money in his pocket, and a poor sickly creature, begging a ride now and then of a few miles, and then walking for miles with four little children, and one a baby."

"Four! your story grows—I thought you had but three."

"I have but three, ma'am; I buried my only girl, the twin to the second boy, at *Batavy*. She never was hearty, and the travelling quite overdid her." The afflicted woman wiped away the fast gathering tears with a corner of her apron, and went on. "At *Batavy* I believe I should have gived out, but there was a tender-hearted gentleman from the eastward, going on to see the Falls, and he paid for my passage, and all my children's, in a return-stage, quite to *Genevy*. This was a great relief to my spirits, and easement to the children's feet; and so after that, we came on pretty well, and met with a great deal of kindness; but, oh! ma'am, 'tis a wearisome journey."

"And here you are," said Mrs. Wilson; "and I suppose the town must take care of you."

"I did not mean to be a burden to the town," replied the woman. "If it pleased the Lord to restore my health, and if I could have got the hundred dollars, I would not have been a burden to any body. I calculated to hire me a little place, bought a loom, and turned my hand to weaving—I am a master weaver, ma'am."

"I am sorry for you, good woman," said Mrs. Wilson. "Here," said she, after rummaging her pocket and taking out a reluctant nine-pence; "Here is a 'widow's mite' for you. I can't give you the least encouragement about my brother's



debt. He left nothing but a destitute child that I have had to support ever since his death."

"Is that little Jane?" exclaimed the woman, for the first time recalling to mind the features of our heroine. "Well," added she, surveying her delicate person with a mingled expression of archness and simplicity, "I think it can't have cost you much to support her, ma'am. I wonder I did not know you," she continued, "when you took my baby so kindly. It was just like you. I used to set a great store by you. But you have grown so tall, and so handsome; as to the matter of that, you was always just like a Lon'on doll."

Jane replaced the child in the mother's lap, and said to Mrs. Winthrop, "I recollect you perfectly, Polly. You were very good to me."

I could not help it, for you was always as pleasant as a little lamb, and as chipper as a bird; but," said she, observing the too evident traces of tears on Jane's cheeks, "I am sorry if I have touched your feelings about the money. I never mistrusted that it was you."

"Do not be uneasy on that account," replied Jane. "I am glad I have heard your story, Polly."

She had listened to the unfortunate woman's history with the keenest anguish. There is no feeling so near of kin to remorse as that which a virtuous child suffers from the knowledge of a parent's vices. The injustice of her father appeared to Jane to have either caused or aggravated every evil the poor woman had suffered. Each particular was sharper than a serpent's tooth to our unhappy orphan. She had not that convenient moral sense, quick to discern and lament the faults of others, but very dull in the perception of our own duties. It was the work of an instant with her to resolve to appropriate her newly acquired treasure to the re-



paration of her father's injustice ; and with the hasty generosity of youth, she left the room to execute her purpose. But, when she took the pocket-book from its hiding-place, and saw again that which she had looked upon with so much joy, as the price of liberty and the means of independence, her heart misgave her ; she felt like a prisoner, the doors of whose prison-house have been thrown open to him, who sees the inviting world without, and who is called upon, in the spirit of martyrdom, to close the door, and bar himself from light and hope. Those who have felt the difficulty of sacrificing natural and virtuous wishes to strict justice, will pardon our heroine a few moments' deliberation. She thought that, as the money had been chiefly the avails of the articles given her by Mr. Lloyd, it could not be considered as derived from her father. She thought how much Mary Hull had exerted herself, and how disappointed she would be ; the engagement with Mr. Evertson occurred to her, and she was not certain it would be quite right to break it ; and, last of all, she thought, that if her present plans succeeded, it could not be very long before she might earn enough to cancel the debt. Jane had not been used to parleying with her duties, or stifling the voice of conscience ; and in a moment the recollection of her father's dishonesty, and the poor woman's perishing condition, swept away every selfish consideration. " Oh, Lord !" she exclaimed, " if I have not compassion on my fellow-servant, how can I hope for thy pity."

We would recommend to all persons, placed in similar circumstances, to all who find almost as many arguments for the wrong as for the right, to bring to their aid the certain light of Scripture, and we think they will be altogether persuaded to be like our heroine, not " saving her bonds." Sure we are, that she was never more to be envied than when, at the



sound of the closing of the parlour door, she flew down stairs, joined Mrs. Winthrop just as she was saying, half sobbing, to her children, "Come, boys—I *am* poor now, for my hope is all gone;" and walking a little distance, till a sharp angle in the road concealed them from the house, she said, "Polly, here is a hundred dollars. I know the debt my father owed you amounts to a good deal more now, but this is all I have,—take it. It is not probable that I shall ever be able to pay the rest, but I shall never forget that I owe it."

Mrs. Winthrop was for a moment dumb with surprise; then bursting into tears of gratitude and joy, she would have overwhelmed Jane with thanks, but she stopped her, saying, "No, Polly, I have only done what was right. I have two favours to beg of you—say nothing to any body in the world, of your having received this money from me; and," added she, faltering, "do not, again, tell the story of the ——" injustice, she would have said, but the word choked her. "I mean, do not say, to any one, that my parents did not pay you."

"Oh! Miss Jane," replied the grateful creature, "I'll mind every thing you tell me, just as much as if it was spoken to me right out of Heaven."

And we have reasons to believe, she was quite as faithful to her promise as could have been expected; for she was never known to make any communication on the subject, except that, when some of her rustic neighbours expressed their surprise at the sudden and inexplicable change in her circumstances, she would say, "She came by it honestly, and by the honesty of some people too, who she guessed, though they did it secretly, would be rewarded openly." And when she heard Jane Elton's name mentioned, she would roll up her eyes and say, "That if every body knew as much as she



did, they would think that girl was an angel upon earth." These oracular hints were, perhaps, not quite so much heeded as Polly expected; at any rate, she was never tempted to disclose the grounds of her opinion.

Jane had a difficult task in reconciling her friend Mary to her disappointment. While she felt a secret delight in the tried rectitude of her favourite, she could not deny herself the indulgence of a little repining.—“If you had but waited, Jane, till Mr. Lloyd came home, he would have advanced the money with all his heart.”

“Yes, but Mary, you must recollect Mr. Lloyd is not to return these six weeks; and, in the mean time, what was to become of the poor woman and her starving children? No, Mary, we must deal justly while we have it in our power. Is it not your great Mr. Wesley who says, ‘It is safe to defer our pleasures, but never to delay our duties?’”

“It seems to me, Jane,” replied Mary, “you pick fruit from every good tree, no matter whose vineyard it grows in. Well, I believe you have done right; but I shall tell the story to Mr. Evertson and Mrs. Harvey with a heavy heart.”

“Tell them nothing,” said Jane, “but that I had an unexpected call for the money, and beg them to mention nothing of the past, for I will not unnecessarily provoke aunt Wilson.”

“Jane,” said Mary earnestly, “you must not deny me the satisfaction of telling how you have laid out the money.”

“No,” replied Jane, “you cannot have that pleasure without telling *why* I was obliged thus to lay it out.—Oh,” added she with more emotion than she had yet shown, “I have never blamed my father that he left me penniless; had he left me the inheritance of a good name, I would not have exchanged it for all the world can give!”



Mary consoled her friend as well as she was able, and then reluctantly parted from her, to perform her disagreeable duty. Mr. Evertson was exceedingly disappointed; he said he had an offer of a very good assistant, who could furnish more money than he expected from Jane; he had preferred Jane Elton, for no sum could outweigh her qualifications for the station he wished her to fill. He was, however, obliged to her for so promptly informing him of her determination, as he had not yet sent a refusal to the person who had solicited the place.

Mrs. Harvey, not content with deploring, which she did sincerely, that she could not have Jane for an inmate, wondered what upon earth she could have done with a hundred dollars! and concluded "that it would be just like Jane Elton, though it would not be like any body else in the world, to pay one of her father's old debts with it." Will not our readers pardon Mary, if Mrs. Harvey inferred from the smile of pleasure that brightened her face, that she had sagaciously guessed the truth? Let that be as it may; all parties promised, and what is much more extraordinary, preserved secrecy; and all that was left of Jane's hopes and plans was the consciousness of having acted right—from right motives. Could any one have seen the peacefulness of her heart, he would have pronounced that consciousness a treasure that has no equivalent.

Thus our heroine, placed in circumstances which would have made some desperate, and most discontented; by 'keeping her heart with all diligence,' proved that 'out of it are the issues of life;' she was first resigned, and then happy. She was on an eminence of virtue, to which the conflicts and irritations of her aunt's family did not reach.



## CHAPTER VIII.

It may be said of him, that Cupid hath clap'd him o' the shoulder, but I warrant him heart-whole.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

MORE than two years glided away without the occurrence of any incident in the life of our heroine that would be deemed worthy of record, by any persons less interested in her history than Mary Hull, or the writer of her simple annals. The reader shall therefore be allowed to pass over this interval, with merely a remark, that Jane had improved in mortal and immortal graces; that the development of her character seemed to interest and delight Mr. Lloyd almost as much as the progress of his own child, and that her uniform patience had acquired for her some influence over the bad passions of her aunt, whose rough points seemed to be a little worn by the continual dropping of Jane's virtues.

In this interval, Martha Wilson had made a stolen match with a tavern-keeper from a neighbouring village, and had removed from her mother's house, to display her character on a new stage, and in a worse light.

Elvira, at eighteen, was much the same as at sixteen, except, that the gayety of her spirits was somewhat checked by the apprehension (that seemed to have grown of late) that



Edward Erskine's affections, which had been vacillating for some time between her and her cousin, would finally preponderate in Jane's favour. It may appear singular, that the same person should admire both the cousins; but it must be remembered, that Edward Erskine was not (as our readers are) admitted behind the scenes; and it must be confessed, that he had not so nice a moral sense, as we hope they possess. He neither estimated the purity of Jane's character, as it deserved to be estimated, nor felt for the faults of Elvira the dislike they merited. Edward Erskine belonged to one of the best families in the county of——. His parents had lost several children in their infancy, and this boy alone remained to them—to become the sole object of their cares and fondness. He was naturally what is called 'good-hearted,' which we believe means thoughtlessly kind and unscrupulously generous. Flattery, and unlimited indulgence made him vain, selfish, and indolent. These qualities were, however, somewhat modified by a frank and easy temper, and sheltered by an uncommonly handsome exterior. Some of his college companions thought him a genius, for, though he was seldom caught in the act of studying, he passed through college without disgrace; this (for he certainly was neither a genius nor a necromancer) might be attributed in part to an aptness at learning, and an excellent memory; but chiefly to an extraordinary facility at appropriating to himself the results of the labours of others. He lounged through the prescribed course of law studies, and entered upon his professional career with considerable *éclat*. He had a rich and powerful voice; and it might be said of him, as of the chosen king of Israel—that 'from the shoulders upwards, he was taller and fairer than any of his brethren.' These are qualifications never slighted by the vulgar; and which are said to be pass-



ports to ladies' favour. He had too, for we would do him ample justice, uncommon talents, but not such as we think would justify the remark often made of him, "that the young squire was the *smartest* man in the country." In short, he belonged to that large class of persons who are generous, but not just; affectionate, but not constant; and often kind, though it would puzzle a casuist to assign to their motives their just proportions of vanity and benevolence. He had recently, by the death of his parents, come into the possession of a handsome estate; and he was accounted the first match in the county of ———.

Mrs. Wilson could not be insensible to the advantages that she believed might be grasped by Elvira, and she determined to relax the strict rule of her house, and to join her assiduities to her daughter's arts, in order to secure the prize. She was almost as much embarrassed in her manœuvres as the famous transporter of the fox, the geese, and the corn. If she opened her doors to young Erskine, to display her daughter, Jane must be seen too; and though she was sufficiently ingenious in contriving ways and means of employing Jane, and securing a clear field for Elvira, Erskine, with the impatience and perversity of a spoiled child, set a double value on the pleasure that was denied him.

The affairs of Mrs. Wilson's household were in this train, when the following conversation occurred between the cousins:—

"If there is a party made to-morrow, to escort the bride, do you expect to join it, Jane?" said Elvira to her cousin, with an expression of anxiety that was quite as intelligible as her question.

"I should like to do so," replied Jane.



"Ah, that of course," answered Elvira; "but I did not ask what you would *like*, but what you *expect*."

"You know, Elvira, I am not sure of obtaining your mother's permission."

"For once in your life, Jane, do be content to speak less like an oracle, and tell me in plain English, whether you expect to go, if you can obtain mother's permission."

"In plain English, then, Elvira, *yes*," replied Jane, smiling.

"You seem very sure of an invitation," answered Elvira, pettishly. Jane's deep blush revealed the truth to her suspicious cousin, which she did not wish to confess or evade; and Elvira continued, "I was sure I overheard Edward say something to you about the ride last night, when you parted on the steps." She paused, and then added, her eyes flashing fire, "Jane, Edward Erskine preferred me once, and in spite of your arts, he shall prefer me again. Remember, miss, the fate of lady Euphrasia."

Jane replied, good naturedly, "I do remember her; but if her proud and artful character suits me, the poverty and helplessness of my condition bears a striking resemblance to the forlorn Amanda's. I trust, however, that my fate will resemble neither of your heroines, for you cannot expect me, on account of the honour of being your rival, to be dashed from a precipice, to point the moral of your story; and I am very certain of not marrying a lord."

"Yes, for there is no lord in this vulgar country to marry; but, with all your affectation of modesty, you aspire to the highest station within your reach."

Jane made no reply, and Elvira poured out her spleen in invectives, which neither abated her own ill humour, nor disturbed her cousin's equanimity. She was determined to



compass her purposes, and in order to do so, she imparted her conjectures to her mother, who had become as faithful, as she was a powerful auxiliary.

In the evening they were all assembled in the parlour. Edward Erskine entered, and his entrance produced a visible sensation in every member of the little circle. Mrs. Wilson dropped half a needleful of stitches on her knitting work, and gave it to Jane to take them up. Jane seemed to find the task very difficult; for a little girl, who sat by the working stand, observed, "Miss Jane, I could take up the stitches better than you do; you miss them half."

"Give me my spectacles—I'll do it myself," said Mrs. Wilson. "Some people are very easily discomposed."

It was a warm evening in the latter part of September; the window was open; Jane retreated to it, and busied herself in pulling the leaves off a rose-bush. Erskine brought matters to a crisis by saying, "I called, Mrs. Wilson, to ask of you the favour of Miss Elton's company to-morrow on the bridal escort."

"I am sorry," replied Mrs. Wilson, "that any young woman's manners, who is brought up in my house, should authorize a gentleman to believe she will, of course, ride with him if asked."

"I beg your pardon, madam," replied Edward (for he, at least, had no fear of the redoubtable Mrs. Wilson), "I have been so happy as to obtain Miss Elton's consent, subject to yours."

"Is it possible!" answered Mrs. Wilson, sneeringly—"quite an unlooked-for deference from *Miss Elton*; not unnecessary, however, for she probably recollected, that to-morrow is lecture day; and, indifferent as she is to the privilege



of going to meeting, she knows that no pleasures ever prevent my going."

"No, madam," replied Erskine, "the pleasures of *others* weigh very light against your duties."

Before Mrs. Wilson had made up her mind whether or not to resent the sarcasm, Erskine rose, and joining Jane at the window, whispered to her, "Rouse your spirit, for heaven's sake; do not submit to such mean tyranny."

Jane had recovered her self-possession, and she replied, smiling, "It is my duty to subdue, not rouse my spirit."

"*Duty!*" exclaimed Erskine; "leave all that ridiculous cant for your aunt: I abhor it. I have your promise, and your promise to me is surely as binding as your *duty* to your aunt."

"That promise was conditional," replied Jane, "and it is no longer in my power to perform it."

"Nor in your inclination, Miss Elton?"

Jane was not well pleased that Erskine should persevere, at the risk of involving her with her aunt; and to avoid his importunity, and her aunt's displeasure, she left the room. "The girl wants spirit," said Erskine, mentally; "she is tame, very tame. It is quite absurd for a girl of seventeen to talk about duties."

He was about to take leave, when Mrs. Wilson, who knew none of the skilful tactics of accomplished manœverers, though her clumsy assaults were often as irresistible, said, "Don't be in such haste, Mr. Erskine. Elvira may go with you."

Edward's first impulse was to decline the offer; but he paused. Elvira was sitting by her mother, and she turned upon him a look of appeal and admiration; his vanity, which had been piqued by Jane, was soothed by this tribute, and



he said, "If Miss Wilson is inclined to the party, I will call for her to-morrow."

Miss Wilson confessed her inclination with a glow of pleasure that consoled him for his disappointment.

Elvira made the most of the advantage she had gained. Mrs. Wilson had of late, though the effort cost her many a groan, indulged Elvira's passion for dress, in the hope that the glittering of the bait would attract the prey. In this calculation she was not mistaken; for, though Erskine affected a contempt for the distinctions of dress, he had been too much flattered for his personal charms, to permit him to be insensible to them; and when he handed Elvira into his gig, he noticed, with pleasure, that she was the best dressed and most stylish looking girl in the party. His vanity was still further gratified, when he overheard his servant say to one of his fellows, "By George, they are a most noble looking pair!" Such is the cormorant appetite of vanity, never satisfied with the quantity, and never nice as to the quality of the food it devours.

Elvira had penetration enough to detect the weakest points in the fortress she had to assail; and so skilfully and successfully did she ply her arts on this triumphant day, that Erskine scarcely thought of Jane, and we fear not once with regret.

Poor Jane remained at home, mortified that Edward went without her, and vexed with herself that she was mortified. To avoid seeing the party on their return, she went out to walk, and was deliberating whither to direct her steps, when she met her friend Mr. Lloyd. "Ah, Jane," said he, "I just came on an errand from my saucy little girl; she has succeeded for the first time to-day in hitching words together, so as to make quite an intelligible sentence; and she is so much



elated, that she has bid me tell thee she cannot go to sleep till 'dear Jane' has heard her read."

Jane replied, she "should be glad to hear her;" but with none of the animation with which she usually entered into the pleasures of her little friend. Mr. Lloyd was disappointed; but he thought she had been suffering some domestic vexation, and they walked on silently.

After a few moments he said, "Quaker as I am, I do not like a silent meeting;—though I should be used to it, for, except that I must answer the questions of my Rebecca, and am expected by thy friend Mary to reply to her praises of thee, I have not much more occasion for the gift of speech than the brothers of La Trappe."

"You forget," replied Jane, who felt her silence gently reproached, "that besides all the use you have for that precious faculty, in persuading the stupid and the obstinate to adopt your benevolent plans of reform, you sometimes condescend to employ it in behalf of a very humble young friend."

"But that young friend must lay aside her humility so far as to flatter me with the appearance of listening."

Jane was a little disconcerted, and Mr. Lloyd did not seem quite free from embarrassment; but as he had roused her from her abstractedness, he began to expatiate on the approach of evening, the charms of that hour when the din of toil has ceased, and no sound is heard but the sweet sounds of twilight breathing the music of nature's evening hymn; he turned his eye to the heavens, which, in their "far blue arch," disclosed star after star, and then the constellations in their brightness. He spoke of the power that formed, and the wisdom that directed them. Jane was affected by his devotion; it was a Promethean touch, that infused a soul



into all nature. She listened with delight, and before they reached the house, her tranquillity was quite restored; and the child and father were both entirely satisfied with the pleasure she manifested in the improvement of her little favourite. But her trials were not over: after the lesson was past—"Dear Jane," said Rebecca, "why did not thee go with the party to-day? I saw them all go past here, and Mr. Erskine and Elvira were laughing, and I looked out sharp for thee; would not any body take thee, Jane?"

Jane did what of all other things she would least have wished to have done—she burst into tears.

The sweet child, whose directness had taken her by surprise, crept up into her lap, and putting her arms around her neck, said affectionately, "I am sorry for thee, dear Jane; don't cry, father would have asked thee, if he had gone." Poor Jane hid her blushes and her tears on the bosom of her kind, but unskilful comforter. She felt the necessity of saying something; but confessions she could not make, and pretences she never made.

Mr. Lloyd saw and pitied her confusion: he rose, and tenderly placing his hand on her head, he said, "My dear young friend, thou hast wisely and safely guided thy little bark thus far down the stream of life; be still vigilant and prudent, and thou wilt glide unharmed through the dangers that alarm thee." He then relieved Jane from his presence, saying, "I am going to my library, and will send Mary to escort thee home."

Jane could not have borne a plainer statement of her case; and though it was very clear that Mr. Lloyd had detected the lurking weakness of her heart, yet she was soothed by his figurative mode of insinuating his knowledge and his counsel. Persons of genuine sensibility possess a certain



tact, that enables them to touch delicate subjects without giving pain. This touch differs as much from a rude and unfeeling grasp as does the management of a fine instrument in the hands of a skilful surgeon, from the mangling and hacking of a vulgar operator.

Mr. Lloyd had heard the village gossip of Edward Erskine's divided attentions to the cousins. Nothing that concerned Jane was uninteresting to him ; and he had watched with eager anxiety the character and conduct of Erskine. He had never liked the young man ; but he thought that he had probably done him injustice, and he had too fair a mind to harbour a prejudice. "Perhaps," he said to himself, "I have judged him hardly ; I am apt to carry my strait-coat habits into every thing ; the young man's extravagant way of talking, his sacrifices to popularity, and his indolence and love of pleasure, may all have been exaggerated in my eyes by their opposition to the strict, sober ways in which I have been bred ; at any rate, I will look upon the bright side. Jane Elton, pure, excellent as she is, cannot love such a man as Edward Erskine appears to me to be ; and she is too noble, I am sure, to regard the advantages which excite the cupidity of her vulgar aunt."

The result of Mr. Lloyd's investigations was not favourable to Erskine. Still his faults were so specious, that they were often mistaken for virtues ; and virtues he had, though none unsullied. There was nothing in his character or history, as far as Mr. Lloyd could ascertain it, that would give him a right to interfere with his advice to Jane ; but still he felt as if she was on the brink of a precipice, and he had no right to warn her of her danger. Perhaps this was a false delicacy, considering the amount of the risk ; but there are few persons of principle and refinement who do not shrink



from meddling with affairs of the heart. Mr. Lloyd hoped—believed that Jane would not marry Edward Erskine; but he did not allow enough for the inexperience of youth, for the liability of a young lady of seventeen to fall in love; for the faith that hopes all things, and believes all things—it wishes to believe.

The fall, the winter, and the spring wore away, and, as yet, no certain indication appeared of the issue of this, to our villagers, momentous affair. Edward certainly preferred Jane, and yet he was more at his ease with Elvira. He could not but perceive the decided superiority of Jane; but Elvira made him always think more and better of himself; and this most agreeable effect of her flatteries and servility reflected a charm on her. Jane was never less satisfied with herself than during this harassing period of her life. A new set of feelings were springing up in her heart, over which she felt that she had little control. At times, her confidence in Edward was strong; and then, suddenly, a hasty expression, or an unpremeditated action, revealed a trait that deformed the fair proportions of the hero of her imagination. Elvira's continual projects, and busy rivalry, provoked, at last, a spirit of competition; which was certainly natural, though wrong; but, alas! our heroine had infirmities. Who is without them?

In the beginning of the month of June, David Wilson came from college, involved in debt and in disgrace. His youthful follies had ripened into vices, and his mother had no patience, no forbearance for the faults, which she might have traced to her own mismanagement, but from which she found a source that relieved her from responsibility. The following was the close of an altercation, noisy and bitter, between this mother and son:—"I am ruined, utterly ruined, if you refuse me the money. Elvira told me you received a



large sum yesterday; and 'tis but one hundred dollars that I ask for."

"And I wonder you can have the heart to ask," replied Mrs. Wilson, sobbing with passion, not grief; "you have no feeling; you never had any for my afflictions. It is but two months, yesterday, since Martha died, and I have no reason to hope for her she died without repentance."

"Ha!" replied David, "Elvira told me, that she confessed, to her husband, her abuse of his children, her love of the bottle, (which, by the by, every body knew before,) and a parcel of stuff that, for our sakes, I think she might have kept to herself."

"Yes, yes, she did die in a terrible uproar of mind about some things of that kind; but she had no feeling of her lost state by nature."

"Oh, the devil!" grumbled the hopeful son and brother; "if I had nothing to worry my conscience but my *state by nature*, I might get one good night's sleep, instead of lying from night till morning like a toad under a harrow."

This comment was either unheard or unheeded by the mother, and she went on: "David, your extravagance is more than I can bear. I have been wonderfully supported under my other trials. If my children, though they are my flesh and blood, are not elected, the Lord is justified in their destruction, and I am still. I have done my duty, and I know not 'why tarry His chariot wheels.'"

"It is an easy thing, ma'am," said David, interrupting his mother, "to be reconciled to everlasting destruction; but if your mind is not equally resigned to the temporal ruin of a child, you must lend me the money."

"Lend it! You have already spent more than your por-



tion in riotous living, and I cannot, in conscience, give you any thing."

Mrs. Wilson thus put a sudden conclusion to the conversation, and retreated from the field, like a skilful general, having exhausted all her ammunition.

As she closed the door, David muttered, "curses on her conscience; it will never let her do what she is not inclined to, and always finds a reason to back her inclinations. The money I must have; if fair means will not obtain it, foul must."



## CHAPTER XI.

Thought, and affliction, passion, Hell itself,  
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

HAMLET.

It was on the evening of the day on which the conversation we have related had occurred between young Wilson and his mother, that Jane, just as she had parted with Erskine, after an unusually delightful walk, and was entering her aunt's door, heard her name pronounced in a low voice. She turned, and saw an old man emerging from behind a projection of the house. He placed his finger on his lips by way of an admonition to silence, and said softly to Jane, "For the love of Heaven, come to my house to-night; you may save life: tell no one, and come after the family is in bed."

"But, John, I do not know the way to your house," replied Jane, amazed at the strange request.

"You shall have a guide, miss. Don't be afraid; 'tis not like you to be afraid when there is good to be done; and I tell you, you may save life; and every one that knows me, knows I never tell a lie for any body."

"Well, said Jane, after a moment's pause "if I go, how shall I find the way?"

"That's what I am afraid will frighten you most of all;



but it must be so. You know where Lucy Willett's grave is, on the side of the hill, above the river; there you will find crazy Bet waiting for you. She is a poor cracked body, but there is nobody I would sooner trust in any trouble; besides, she is in the secret already, and there is no help for it."

"But," said Jane, "may I not get some one else to go with me?"

"Not for the wide world. Nothing will harm you."

Jane was about to make some further protestation, when a sound from the house alarmed the man, and he disappeared as suddenly as he had appeared.

John was an old man who had been well known to two or three successive generations in the village. He had not strength or health for hard labour, but had gained a subsistence by making baskets, weaving new seats into old chairs, collecting herbs for "spring beer," and digging medicinal roots from the mountains; miscellaneous offices, which are usually performed by one person, where the great principle of a division of labour is yet unknown and unnecessary. A disciple of Gall might, perhaps, have detected in the conformation of the old man's head, certain indications of a contemplative turn of mind, and a feeling heart; but, as we are unlearned in that fashionable science, we shall simply remark, that there was in the mild cast of his large but sunken eye, and the deep-worn channels of his face, an expression that would lead an observer to think he had felt and suffered; that he possessed the wisdom of reflection, as well as the experience of age; and that he had been accustomed, in nature's silent and solitary places to commune with the Author of Nature. He inhabited a cottage at some distance from the village, but within the precincts of the town. When the skill of the domestic leeches was at fault, in the case of a sick cow or a wormy child,



he was called to a consultation; and the efficacy of the simples he had administered, had sometimes proved so great, as to induce a suspicion of a mysterious charm. But the superstitious belief in witches and magic has vanished with the credulities of other times; and the awe of 'John of the Mountain,' as he was called, or, for brevity's sake, 'John Mountain,' never outlived the period of childhood.

Jane knew that John was honest and kind-hearted, and particularly well disposed to her, for he had occasionally brought her a pretty wild-flower, or a basket of berries; and then he would say, "Ah, Miss Jane, I grow old and forgetful, but the old man can't forget the kindness that's been done to him in days past; you was as gay as a lark then. My poor old bald head! it's almost as bare inside as out; but I shall never forget the time—it was a sorrowful year, we had had a hard winter, the snows drifted on the mountains, and for six weeks I never saw the town, and poor Sarah lying sick at home; and when I did get out, I came straight to your mother's, for she had always a pitiful heart, and an open and full hand too, and she stalked my alms basket full of provisions. Then you came skipping out of the other room, with a flannel gown in your hand, and your very eyes laughed with pleasure, and when you gave it to me, you said, "It is for your wife, and I sewed every stitch of it, John;" and then you was not bigger than a poppet, and could not speak plain yet. When I got home, and told my old woman, she shook her head, and said, you "was not long for this world;" but I laughed at her foolishness, and asked her, if the finest saplings did not live to make the noblest trees? Thanks to Him that is above, you are alive at this day, and many a wanderer will yet find shelter under your branches."

We trust our readers will pardon this digression, and ac-



cept the gratitude of the old man, as a proof that all men's good deeds are not 'written in sand.'

After John's departure, Jane remained for a few moments where he had left her, ruminating on his strange request, when her attention was called to a noise in her aunt's sleeping apartment, and she heard, as she thought, crazy Bet's voice raised to its highest pitch. She passed hastily through the passage, and on opening her aunt's door, she beheld a scene of the greatest confusion. The bed-clothes had been hastily stripped from the bed and strewed on the floor, and Bet stood at the open window with the bed in her right hand. She had, by a sudden exertion of her strength, made an enormous rent in the well-wove home-made tick, and was now quite leisurely shaking out the few feathers that still adhered to it. In her left hand she held a broom, which she dexterously brandished, to defend herself from the interference of Sukey, the colored servant girl, who stood panic-struck and motionless; her dread of her mistress's vengeance impelling her forward, and her fear of the moody maniac operating upon her locomotive powers, like a Gorgon influence. Her conflicting fears had not entirely changed her Ethiopian skin, but they had subtracted her colour in stripes, till she looked like Robin Hood's willow wand.

"Why did you not stop her?" exclaimed Jane, hastily passing the girl.

"Stop her, missy? the land's sake! I could as easy stop a flash of lightning! missy must think me a 'rac'lous creature, respecting me to hold back such a harricane."

At Jane's approach Bet dropped the broom, and threw the empty bed-tick at poor Sukey, who shook it off, not, however, till her woolly head was completely powdered with the lint. "Now, Sukey," screamed Bet with a wild peal of



laughter, "look in the glass, and you'll see how white you'll be in Heaven; the black stains will all be washed out there!"

"But, Bet," said Jane, where are the feathers?"

"Where child? she replied, smiling with the most provoking indifference, "where are last year's mourners? where is yesterday's sunshine, or the morning's fog?"

"Why did you do this, Bet?"

"Do you ask a *reason* of me?" she replied, with a tone in which sorrow and anger were equally mingled, and then putting her finger to her forehead, she added, "the space is empty where it should be, Jane—quite empty, and sometime aching!"

Jane felt that the poor woman was not a subject of reproach; and turning away, she said, "Aunt will be very angry."

"Yes," replied Bet, "she will weep and howl, but she should thank me for silencing some of the witnesses."

"Witnesses, Bet?"

"Yes, child, witnesses; are not moth-eaten garments and corrupted riches witnesses against the rich, the hard-hearted, and close-handed? She should not have denied a bed to my aching head and weary body. She should not have told me, that the bare ground and hard boards were soft and easy enough for a "rantipole beggar."

The recollection of the promise she had given to John now occurred to Jane, and she was deliberating whether or not to speak to Bet about it, when Mrs. Wilson, who had been absent on a visit to one of her neighbors, came in. In her passage through the kitchen, Sukey had hinted to her her loss, and she hastened on to ascertain its extent. Inquiries were superfluous; the empty tick was lying where Sukey had



left it, and the feathers which it had contained were not. Mrs. Wilson darted forwards towards Bet, on whom she would have wreaked her hasty vengeance, but Bet, aware of her intention, sprang through the window, quick as thought, and so rapid, and seemingly, spiritual, was her flight, that a minute had scarcely passed, when the shrill tones of her voice were heard rising in the distance, and they were just able to distinguish the familiar words of her favorite methodist hymn—

“Sinners stand a trembling,  
Saints are rejoicing.”

Mrs. Wilson turned to Jane, and with that disposition which such persons have when any evil befalls them, to lay the blame on somebody, she would have vented her spite on her, but it was too evident that the only part Jane had had in the misfortune was an ineffectual effort to avert it, and the good lady was deprived of even that alleviation of her calamity. This scene at which, in spite of her aunt's awful presence, Jane had laughed heartily, was not at all adapted to inspire her with confidence in the guide, whose wild and fantastic humours she knew it to be impossible for any one to control. Her resolution was a little shaken; but, after all, she thought, “It is possible I may find the house without her. I know the course I should take. At any rate, I should be miserable if any evil should come of my neglect of old John's request. There can be no real dangers, and I will not imagine any.”

Still, after the family were all hushed in repose, and Jane had stolen from her bed and dressed herself for her secret expedition, she shrunk involuntarily from the task before her. “I do not like this mystery,” said she, mentally. “I wish I had told my aunt, and asked David to go with me, or



I might have told Mary Hull. There could have been no harm in that. But it is now too late. John said, I might save life, and I will think of nothing else."

She rose from the bed, where she had seated herself to ponder, for the last time, upon the difficulties before her, crept softly down stairs, passed her aunt's room, and got clear of the house unmolested, except by a slight growl from Brutus, the house-dog, whose dreams she had broken, but, at her well-known kindly patting, and "Lie down, Brutus, lie down," he quietly resumed his sleeping posture. Her courage was stimulated by having surmounted one obstacle. The waning moon had risen, and shed its mild lustre over the peaceful scene. "Now," thought Jane, "that I have stirred up my womanish thoughts with a manly spirit, I wonder what I could have been afraid of."

Anxious to ascertain whether she was to have the doubtful aid of crazy Bet's conduct, or trust solely to her own, she pressed onward. To shorten her way to Lucy's grave, and to avoid the possibility of observation, she soon left the public road, and walked along under the shadow of a low-browed hill, which had formerly been the bank of the river, but from which it had receded and left an interval of beautiful meadow between the hill and its present bed. The deep verdure of the meadow sparkled with myriads of fire-flies, that seemed in this, their hour, to be keeping their merry revels by the music of the passing stream. The way was, as yet, perfectly familiar to Jane. After walking some distance in a straight line, she crossed the meadow by a direct path to a large tree, which had been, in part, uprooted by a *freshet*, and which now lay across the river, and supplied a rude passage to the adventurous; the tenacity of some of its roots still retaining it firmly in the bank. Fortunately the stream was unusually



low, and when our heroine reached the farther extremity of the fallen trunk, she sprang without difficulty over the few feet of water between her and the dry sand of the shore.

"That's well done!" exclaimed crazy Bet, starting up from a mound in the form of a grave. "Strong of heart, and light of foot, you are a fit follower for one that hates the broad and beaten road, and loves the narrow straight way and the high rock. Sit down and rest you," she continued, for Jane was out of breath from ascending the deep bank to where crazy Bet stood; "sit down, child; you may sit quiet. It is not time for her to rise yet."

"Oh, Bet," said Jane, "if you love me, take those greens off your head; they make you look so wild."

A stouter heart than Jane's would have quailed at Bet's appearance. She had taken off her old bonnet and tied it on a branch of the tree that shaded the grave, and twisted around her head a full leaved vine, by which she had confined bunches of wild flowers, that drooped around her pale brow and haggard face; her long hair was streaming over her shoulders; her little black mantle thrown back, leaving her throat and neck bare. The excitement of the scene, the purpose of the expedition, and the moonlight, gave to her large black eyes an unusual brightness.

To Jane's earnest entreaty she replied, "Child, you know not what you ask. Take off these greens, indeed! Every leaf of them is a prayer. There is a charm in every one of them. There is not an imp of the evil one that dares to touch me while I wear them. The toad with his glistening eye, springs far from me; and the big scaly snake, glides away from me."

"But," said Jane, in a tone of more timid expostulation, "what have I to guard me, Bet?"



"You!" and as she spoke she stroked Jane's hair back from her pure smooth brow; "have not you innocence? and know you not that is 'God's seal in the forehead' to keep you from all harm. I have had *Guerdeen*, but innocence is stronger than a regiment of them! Foolish girl! sit down—I say, she will not rise yet."

Jane obeyed her command, and rallying her spirits, replied, "No, Bet, I am not afraid she will rise. I believe the dead lie very quiet in their graves."

"Yes, those may that die in their beds, and are buried by the tolling of the bell, and lie with company about them in the churchyard; but, I tell you, those that row themselves over the dark river, never have a quiet night's rest in their cold beds."

"Come," said Jane, impatiently rising, "for mercy's sake, let us go."

"I cannot stir from this spot," replied Bet, "till the moon gets above that tree; and so be quiet, while I tell you Lucy's story. Why, child, I set here watching by her many a night, till her hour comes, and then I always go away, for the dead don't love to be seen rising from their beds."

"Well, Bet, tell me Lucy's story, and then I hope you will not keep me any longer here; and you need not tell me much, for, you know, I have heard it a thousand times."

"Ah! but you did not see her as I did, when Ashley's men went out, and she followed them, and begged them on her knees, for the love of God, not to fire upon the prisoners; for the story had come, that Shay's\* men would cover their front with the captives; and you did not see her when he was brought to her shot through the heart, and dead as she

\* See note at the end.



is now. She did not speak a word—she fell upon his neck, and she clasped her arms round him; they thought to cut them off, it was so hard to get them loose;—and when they took her from him, (and the maniac laid her hand on Jane's head) she was all gone here. The very day they put him under the green sod, she drowned herself in that deep place, under the mourning willow, that the boys call Lucy's well. And they buried her here for the squires and the deacons found it against law and gospel too, to give her christian burial."

Bet told all these circumstances with an expression and action that showed she was living the scene over, while her mind dwelt on them. Jane was deeply interested; and when Bet concluded, she said, "Poor Lucy! I never felt so much for her."

"That's right, child: now we will go on; but first let that tear-drop that glistens in the moonbeam, fall on the grave, it helps to keep the grass green; and the dead like to be cried for," she added mournfully.

They now proceeded; crazy Bet leading the way, with long and hasty strides, in a diagonal course still ascending the hill, till she plunged into a deep wood, so richly clothed with foliage, as to be impervious to the moon-beams, and so choaked with underbrush, that Jane found it very difficult to keep up with her pioneer. They soon however, emerged into an open space, completely surrounded and enclosed by lofty trees. Crazy Bet had not spoken since they began their walk; she now stopped, and turning abruptly to Jane, "Do you know," said she, "who are the worshippers that meet in this temple? the spirits that were 'sometime disobedient,' but since *He* went and preached to them, they came out from



their prison house, and worship in the open air, and under the light of the blessed heavens."

"It is a beautiful spot," said Jane; I should think all obedient spirits might worship in this temple.

"Say you so;—then worship with me." The maniac fell on her knees—Jane knelt beside her: she had caught a spark of her companion's enthusiasm. The singularity of her situation, the beauty of the night, the novelty of the place, on which the moon now riding high in the heavens poured a flood of silver light, all conspired to give a high tone to her feelings. It is not strange she should have thought she never heard any thing so sublime as the prayer of her crazed conductor—who raised her arms and poured out her soul in passages of scripture the most sublime and striking, woven together by her own glowing language. She concluded suddenly, and springing on her feet, said to Jane, "Now follow me: fear not, and falter not; for you know what awaits the fearful and unbelieving,"

Jane assured her she had no *fear* but that of being too late. "You need not think of that; the spirit never quits till I come."

They now turned into the wood by a narrow pathway, whose entrance laid under the shadow of two young beech trees: crazy Bet paused—"See ye these, child," said she, pointing to the trees, "I know two who grew up thus on the same spot of earth;—so lovingly they grew," and she pointed to the interlacing of the branches—"young and beautiful; but the axe was laid to the root of one—and the other (and she pressed both her hands on her head, and screamed wildly) died here." A burst of tears afforded her a sudden relief.

"Poor broken-hearted creature!" murmured Jane.

"No, child; when she weeps, then the band is loosened



for," added she, drawing closer to Jane and whispering, "they put an iron band around her head, and when she is in darkness, it presses till she thinks she is in the place of the tormenter: by the light of the moon it's loosened. You cannot see it; but it is there—always there."

Jane began now to be alarmed at the excitement of Bet's imagination; and turning from her abruptly, entered the path, which, after they had proceeded a few yards, seemed to be leading them into a wild trackless region. "Where are we going Bet?" she exclaimed. "Through a pass, child, that none knows but the wild bird and the wild woman. Have you never heard of the 'caves of the mountain?'"\*

"Yes," replied Jane; "but I had rather not go through them to-night. Cannot we go some other way!"

"Nay, there is no other way; follow me, and fear not."

Jane had often heard of the pass called the 'Mountain-Caves,' and she believed it had only been penetrated by a few rash youths of daring and adventurous spirit. She was appalled at the thought of entering it in the dead of night, and with such a conductor; she paused, but she could see no way of escape, and summoning all her resolution, she followed Bet, who took no note of her scruples. They now entered a defile, which apparently had been made by some tremendous convulsion of nature, that had rent the mountain asunder, and piled rock on rock in the deep abyss. The breadth of the passage, which was walled in by the perpendicular sides of the mountain, was not in any place more than twenty feet; and sometimes so narrow, that Jane thought she might have ex-

\* The seekers and lovers of Nature's beauties have multiplied since "A New England Tale" was written." The "Caves of the Mountain," or in our rustic phrase, the "Ice-hole," is now well known to the visitors of Berkshire as the "*Ice Glen*."



tended her arms quite across it. But she had no leisure for critical accuracy ; her wayward guide pressed on, heedless of the difficulties of the way. She would pass between huge rocks, that had rolled so near together, as to leave but a very narrow passage between them ; then grasping the tangled roots that projected from the side of the mountain, and placing her feet in the fissures of the rocks, or in the little channels that had been worn by the continual dropping from the mountain rills, she would glide over swiftly and safely, as if she had been on the beaten highway. They were sometimes compelled, in the depths of the caverns, to prostrate themselves, and creep through narrow apertures between the rocks it was impossible to surmount ; and Jane felt that she was passing over masses of ice, the accumulation perhaps of a hundred winters. She was fleet and agile, and inspired with almost supernatural courage ; she, ' though a woman, naturally born to fears,' followed on resolutely, till they came to an immense rock, whose conical and giant form rested on broken masses below, that on every side were propping this ' mighty monarch of the scene.'

For the first time, crazy Bet seemed to remember she had a companion, and to give a thought to her safety. " Jane," said she, " go carefully over this lower ledge, there is a narrow foothold there ; let not your foot slip on the wet leaves, or the soft moss. I am in the spirit, and I must mount to the summit."

Jane obeyed her directions, and when without much trouble, she had attained the farther side of the rock, she looked back for crazy Bet, and saw her standing between heaven and earth on the very topmost point of the high rock : she leant on the branch of a tree she had broken off in her struggle to reach that lofty station. The moon had declined



a little from the meridian ; her oblique rays did not penetrate the depths where Jane stood, but fell in their full brightness on the face of her votress above. Her head, as we have noticed, was fantastically dressed with vines and flowers ; her eyes were in a fine ‘frenzy, rolling from earth to heaven, and heaven to earth ;’ she looked like the wild genius of the savage scene, and she seemed to breathe its spirit, when, after a moment’s silence, she sang, with a powerful and thrilling voice, which waked the sleeping echoes of the mountain, the following stanza :

“Tell them ‘I AM,’ Jehovah said  
To Moses, while earth heard in dread,  
And smitten to the heart ;  
At once above, beneath, around,  
All nature, without voice or sound,  
Replied, oh Lord, Thou art !”

In vain Jane called upon her. In vain she entreated her to descend. She seemed wrapped in some heavenly vision ; and she stood mute again and motionless, till a bird, that had been scared from its nest in a cleft of the rock, by the wild sounds, fluttered over her and lighted on the branch she still held in her hand. “Oh !” exclaimed she, “messenger of love and mercy, I am content ;” and she swiftly descended the sloping side of the rock, which she hardly seemed to touch.

“Now,” said Jane, soothingly, “you are rested, let us go on.”

“Rested ! yes, my body is rested, but my spirit has been the way of the eagle in the air. You cannot bear the revelation now, child. Come on, and do your earthly work.”

They walked on for a few yards, when Bet suddenly turned to the left and ascended the mountain, which was



there less steep and rugged than at any place they had passed. At a short distance before her Jane perceived, glimmering through the trees, a faint light. "Heaven be praised!" said she, "that must be John's cottage."

As they came nearer the dog barked; and the old man, coming out of the door, signed to Jane to sit down on a log, which answered the purpose of a rude door-step; and then speaking to crazy Bet, in a voice of authority, which, to Jane's utter surprise, she meekly obeyed—"Take off," said he, "you mad fool, them jinglements from your head, and stroke your hair back like a decent christian woman; get into the house, but mind you, say not a word to her."

Crazy Bet entered the house, and John, turning to Jane, said, "You are an angel of goodness for coming here to-night, though I am afraid it will do no good; but since you are here, you shall see her."

"See her! see what, John?" interrupted Jane.

"That's what I must tell you, miss; but it is a piercing story to tell to one that looks like you. It's telling the deeds of the pit to the angels above." He then went on to state, that a few days before, he had been searching the mountains for some medicinal roots, when his attention was suddenly arrested by a low moaning sound, and on going in the direction from which it came, he found a very young looking creature, with a new-born infant, wrapped in a shawl, and lying in her arms. He spoke to the mother, but she made no reply, and seemed quite unconscious of every thing, till he attempted to take the child from her; she then grasped it so firmly, that he found it difficult to remove it. He called his wife to his assistance, and placed the infant in her arms. Pity for so young a sufferer, nerved the old man with unwonted strength, and enabled him to bear the mother to his hut.



There he used the simple restoratives his skill dictated ; but nothing produced any effect till the child, with whom the old woman had taken unwearied pains, revived and cried. " The sound," he said, " seemed to waken life in a dead body." The mother extended her arms, as if to feel for her child, and they gently laid it in them. She felt the touch of its face, and burst into a flood of tears, which seemed greatly to relieve her ; for after that she took a little nourishment, and fell into a sweet sleep, from which she awoke in a state to make some explanations to her curious preservers. But as the account she gave of herself was, of necessity, interrupted and imperfect, we shall take the liberty to avail ourselves of our knowledge of her history, and offer our readers a slight sketch of it.



## CHAPTER X.

Death lies on her like an untimely frost,  
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

THE name of the stranger was Mary Oakley. Her parents had gone out adventurers to the West Indies, where, at the opening of flattering prospects, they both died victims to the fever of the climate, which seldom spares a northern constitution. Mary, then in her infancy, had been sent home to her grandparents, who nursed this only relic of their unfortunate children with doting fondness. They were in humble life; and they denied themselves every comfort, that they might gratify every wish, reasonable and unreasonable, of their darling child. She, affectionate and ardent in her nature, grew up impetuous and volatile. Instead of 'rocking the cradle of reposing age,' she made the lives of her old parents resemble a fitful April day, sunshine and cloud succeeding each other in rapid alternation. She loved the old people tenderly—passionately, when she had just received a favour from them; but, like other spoiled children, she never testified that love by deferring her will to theirs, or suffering their wisdom to govern her childish inclinations. She grew up



“Fair as the form that, wove in fancy’s loom,  
Floats in light vision round the poet’s head.”

Most unhappily for her, there was a college in the town where she lived, and she very early became the favourite belle of the young collegians, whose attentions she received with delight, in spite of the remonstrances and entreaties of her guardians, who were well aware that a young and beautiful creature could not, with propriety or safety, receive the civilities of her superiors in station, attracted by her personal charms.

David Wilson, more artful, more unprincipled than any of his companions, addressed her with the most extravagant flattery, and lavished on her costly favours. Giddy and credulous, poor Mary was a victim to his libertinism. He soothed her with hopes and promises, till, in consequence of the fear of detection in another transaction, where detection would have been dangerous, he left —— and returned to his mother’s, without giving Mary the slightest intimation of his departure.

She took the desperate resolution of following him. She felt certain she should not survive her confinement, and hoped to secure the protection of Wilson for her infant. Her tenderness, we believe, more than her pride, induced her to conceal her miseries from her only true friends. She thought any thing would be easier for them to bear than a knowledge of her misconduct; and for the few days she remained under their roof, and while she was preparing a disguise for her perilous journey, she affected slight sickness and derangement. They were alarmed and anxious, and insisted on making a bed for her in their room: this somewhat embarrassed her proceedings; but, on the night of her escape, she told them, with a determined manner, that she could only sleep in her own bed, and alone in her own room. They did not resist



her; they never had. Mary kissed them when she bade them good-night with unusual tenderness. They went sorrowing to their beds. She wrote a few incoherent lines, addressed to them, praying for their forgiveness; expressing her gratitude and her love; and telling them, that life before her seemed a long and a dark road, and she did not wish to go any farther in it, and begging them not to search for her, for in one hour the waves would roll over her. She placed the scroll on the table, crept out of her window, and left for ever the protecting roof of her kind old parents.

When they awoke to a knowledge of their loss, they were overwhelmed with grief. Their neighbours flocked about them, to offer their assistance and consolation; and though some of the most penetrating among them suspected the cause of the poor girl's desperation, more forbearing and kind than persons usually are in such circumstances, they spared the old people the light of their conjectures.

Poor Mary persevered in her fatiguing and miserable journey, which was rendered much longer by her fearfully shunning the public road. She obtained a kind shelter at the farmers' houses at night, where she always contrived to satisfy their curiosity by some plausible account of herself. At the end of a week she arrived, wearied and exhausted, in the neighbourhood of Wilson. She watched for him in the evening, near his mother's house, and succeeded in obtaining an interview with him. He was enraged that she had followed him, and said that it was impossible for him to do any thing for her. She told him she asked nothing for herself; but she entreated him not to add to his guilt the crime of suffering their unhappy offspring to die with neglect. Utterly selfish and hard-hearted, the wretch turned from her without one word of kindness: and then recollecting that if she was



discovered, he should be involved in farther troubles, he returned, and gave her a direction, which she believed would enable her to find John's cottage on the mountain. If she gets there, thought he as he left her, whether she lives or dies, she will be far out of the way for the present—and the future must take care of itself.

Mary with a faint heart followed his direction, and the next day she was discovered by old John in the situation we have mentioned. Perhaps there are some who cannot believe that any being should be so utterly depraved as David Wilson. But let them remember, that he began with a nature more inclined to evil than to good, that his mother's mismanagement had increased every thing that was bad in him, and extinguished every thing that was good—that the continual contradictions of his mother's professions and life, had led him to an entire disbelief of the truths of religion, as well as a contempt of its restraints.

After the old man had finished Mary's story, or rather so much of it as he had been able to gather from her confessions, Jane asked him "Why she had been sent for?"

"Why miss," he replied, "after the poor thing had come to herself, all her trouble seemed to be about her baby, and I did not know what to advise her; my woman and I might have done for it for the present, but our sun is almost set, and we could do but for a little while. I proposed to her to go for Wilson, and I am sure the sight of her might have softened a heart of flint; but she shivered at the bare mention of it: she said, 'No, no; I cannot see that cruel face upon my deathbed.' And then I thought of you, and I told her if there was any body could bring him to a sense of right it was you, and that at any rate you might think of some comfort for her; for I told her every body in the village



knew you for the wisest and discreetest, and gentlest. At first she *relucted*; and then the sight of her baby seemed to persuade her, and she bade me go, but she gave me a strict charge that no one should come with you; for she said she wished her memory buried with her in the grave. When I left her to go to you, I hoped you might speak some words of comfort to her that would be better than medicine for her, and heal the body as well as the mind; but when I came back, there was a dreadful change—the poor little one had gone into a fit, and she would take it from my wife into her arms, and there it died more than an hour ago—and she sits up in the bed holding it yet—and she has not spoken a word, nor turned her eyes from it—her cheeks look as if there was a living fire consuming her. Oh, Miss Jane, it is awful to look upon such a fallen star! Now you are prepared—come in—may be the sight of you will rouse her.”

Jane followed John into his little habitation. The old couple had kindly resigned their only bed to the sufferer. She was sitting as John had described her, fixed as a statue. Her beautiful black glossy curls, which had been so often admired and envied, were snarled, and clustered in rich masses over her temples and neck. A tear that had started from the fountain of feeling, now sealed for ever, hung on the dark rich eye-lash that fringed her downcast eye. Jane wondered that any thing so wretched could look so lovely. Crazy Bet was kneeling at the foot of the bed, and apparently absorbed in prayer, for her eyes were closed, and her lips moved, though they emitted no sound. The old woman sat in the corner of the fire-place, smoking a broken pipe, to soothe the unusual agitation she felt.

Jane advanced towards the bed. “Speak to her,” said John. Jane stooped, and laid her hand gently on Mary’s.



She raised her eyes for the first time, and turned them on Jane with a look of earnest inquiry, and then shaking her head, she said in a low mournful voice—"No, no; we cannot be parted; you mean to take her to heaven, and you say I am guilty, and must not go. They told me you were coming—you need not hide your wings—I know you—there is none but an angel would look upon me with pity."

"Oh!" exclaimed Jane, "can nothing be done for her? at least let us take away this dead child, it is growing cold in her arms." She attempted to take the child, and Mary relaxed her hold; but as she did so, she uttered a faint scream, the paleness of death overspread her face, and she fell back on the pillow.

"Ah, she is gone!" exclaimed John.

Crazy Bet sprang on her feet, and raised her hand—"Hush!" said she, "I heard a voice saying, 'Her sins are forgiven'—'she is one come out of great tribulation.'"

There were a few moments of as perfect stillness as if they had all been made dumb and motionless by the stroke of death. Jane was the first to break silence—"Did she," she inquired of the old man, "express any penitence—any hope?"

John shook his head. "Them things did not seem to lay on her mind; and I did not think it worth while to disturb her about them. Ah, miss, the great thing is how we live, not how we die."

Jane felt the anxiety, so natural, to obtain some religious expression, that should indicate preparation in the mind of the departed.

"Surely," said she, "it is never too late to repent—to beg forgiveness."

"No, miss," replied John, who seemed to have religious notions of his own—"especially when there has been such a



short account as this poor child had ; but the work must be all between the creature and the Creator ; and for my part, I don't place much dependence on what people say on a death-bed. I have lived a long life, Miss Jane, and many a one have I seen, and heard too, when sickness and distress were heavy upon them, and death staring them in the face, and they could not sin any more—they would seem to repent, and talk as beautiful as any saint ; but if the Lord took his hand from them, and they got well again, they went right back into the old track. No, Miss Jane, it is the life—it is the life, we must look to. This child," he added, going to the bed, and laying his brown and shrivelled hand upon her fair young brow, now 'chill and changeless;' "this child was but sixteen, she told me so. The Lord only knows what temptations she has had. He it is, Miss Jane, that has put that in our hearts that makes us feel sorry for her now ; and can you think that He is less pitiful than we are ? I think she will be beaten with few stripes ; but," he continued solemnly, covering his face with his hands,—“we are poor ignorant creatures ; it is all a mystery after this world ; we know nothing about it.”

“Yes,” said Jane, “we do know, John, that all will be right.”

“True,” he replied ; “and it is that should make us lay our fingers on our mouths and be still.”

Jane had been so much absorbed in the mournful scene, that the necessity of her return before the breaking of day had not occurred to her mind, and would not, perhaps, if John had not, after a few moments' pause, reminded her of it, by saying, “I am sorry, Miss Jane, you have had such a walk for nothing ; but,” added he, “to the wise nothing is vain, and you are of so teachable a make, that you may have learn-



ed some good lessons here ; you may learn, at least, that there is nothing to be much grieved for in this world but guilt ; and some people go through a long life without learning that. You had better return now ; I will go round the hill with you, and show you the path this crazy creature should have led you. She is in one of her still fits now : there is nothing calms her down like seeing death : she will not move from here till after the burying."

Jane looked for the last time on the beautiful form before her, and with the ingenuous and keen feeling of youth, wept aloud.

"It is indeed a sore sight," said John ; "it makes my old eyes run over as they have not for many a year. The Lord have mercy on her destroyer ! Oh, miss ! it is sad to see this beautiful flower cut down in its prime ; but who would change her condition for his ? He may go rioting on, but there is that gnawing at his heart's core that will not be quieted."

Jane told the kind old man that she was now ready to go, and they left the hut together. He led her by a narrow foot-path around the base of the mountain, till they came to a part of the way familiar to Jane. She then parted from her conductor, after inquiring of him if he could inter the bodies secretly ? He replied, that he could without much difficulty ; and he certainly should, for he had given his promise to the young creature, who seemed to dread nothing so much as a discovery which might lead to her old parents knowing her real fate.

Anxious to reach home in time to avoid the necessity of any disclosures, Jane hastened forward, and arrived at her aunt's before the east gave the slightest token of the approach of day. She entered the house carefully, and turned into



the parlour to look for some refreshment in an adjoining pantry. A long walk, and a good deal of emotion, we believe, in real life, are very apt to make people, even the most refined, hungry and thirsty.

Jane had entered the parlour, and closed the door after her, before she perceived that she was not the only person in it; but she started with alarm, which certainly was not confined to herself, when she saw standing at Mrs. Wilson's desk, which was placed at one corner of the room, her son David, with his mother's pocket-book in his hand, from which he was in the act of subtracting a precious roll of bank bills that had been deposited there the day before. Jane paused for a moment, and but for a moment, for as the truth flashed on her, she sprang forward, and seizing his arm, exclaimed, "For Heaven's sake, David, put back that money! Do not load yourself with any more sins."

He shook her off, and hastily stuffing the money in his pocket, said that he must have it; that his mother would not give him enough to save him from destruction; that he had told her ruin was hanging over his head; that she had driven him to help himself; and, "as to sin," he added fiercely, "I am in too deep already to be frightened by that thought."

It occurred to Jane that he might have been driven to this mode of supplying himself, in order to relieve the extreme need of Mary Oakley; and she told him, in a hurried manner, the events of the night. For a moment he felt the sting of conscience, and, perhaps, a touch of human feeling; for he staggered back into a chair, and covering his face with his hands, muttered, "*Dead! Mary dead!* Good God! Hell has no place bad enough for me;" and then rousing himself, he said, with a deep tone, "Jane Elton, I am a ruined, des-



perate man. You thought too well of me, when you imagined it was for that poor girl I was doing this deed. No, no! her cries did not trouble me; but there are those whose clamours must be hushed by money—curse on them!”

“But,” said Jane, “is there no other way, David? I will entreat your mother for you.”

“Yes! yes, and she will heed you as much as a wolf does the bleating of a lamb. I tell you, I am desperate, Jane, and care not for the consequences. But,” he added, “I will run no risk of discovery,” and as he spoke, he drew a pistol from beneath his surtout, and putting the muzzle to his breast, said to Jane, “give me your solemn promise, that you will never betray me, or I will put myself beyond the reach of human punishment.”

“Oh!” said Jane, “I will promise any thing. Do not destroy your soul and body both.”

“Do you promise, then?”

“I do, most solemnly.”

“Then,” said he, hastily replacing the pistol, and locking the desk with the false key he had obtained; “then all is as well as it can be. My mother will suspect, but she will not dare to tell whom; and your promise, Jane, makes me secure.”

Jane saw he was so determined, that any further interposition would be useless; and she hurried away to her own apartment, where she threw herself upon her bed, sorrowing for the crimes and miseries of others. Quite exhausted with the fatigues of the night, she soon fell asleep.

She was too much distressed and terrified, to reflect upon the consequences that might result from the exacted promise. She had, doubtless, been unnecessarily alarmed by David’s threat of self-slaughter; for, confused and desperate as he



was, he would hardly have proceeded to such an outrage; and, besides, we have reason to believe the pistol was neither primed nor loaded, but that he had provided himself with it for emergencies which might occur in the desperate career in which he had engaged. He had been concerned with two ingenious villains in changing the denomination of bank bills. His accomplices had been detected and imprisoned, and they were now exacting money from him by threatening to disclose his agency in the transaction.

Always careless of involving himself in guilt, and goaded on by the fear of the state-prison, he resolved, without hesitation, on this robbery, which would not only give him the means of present relief, but would supply him with a store for future demands, which he had every reason to expect from the character of his comrades.



## CHAPTER XI.

There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats ;  
For I am arm'd so strong in honesty,  
That they pass by me as the idle wind,  
Which I respect not.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

JANE, exhausted by the agitations of the night, contrary to her usual custom, remained in bed much longer than the other members of the family, and did not awake from deep and unquiet slumbers, till the bell called the household to prayers.

Mrs. Wilson was scrupulous in exacting the attendance of every member of her family at her morning and evening devotions. With this requisition Jane punctually and cheerfully complied, as she did with all those that did not require a violation of principle. But still she had often occasion secretly to lament, that where there was so much of the form of worship, there was so little of its spirit and truth ; and she sometimes felt an involuntary self-reproach, that her body should be in the attitude of devotion, while her mind was following her aunt through earth, sea, and skies, or pausing to wonder at the remarkable inadaptation of her prayers to the condition and wants of humanity in general, and especially to their particular modification in her own family.



Mrs. Wilson was fond of the bold and highly figurative language of the prophets; and often identified herself with the Psalmist, in his exultation over his enemies, in his denunciations, and in his appeals for vengeance.

We leave to theologians to decide, whether these expressions from the king of Israel are meant for the enemies of the church, or whether they are to be imputed to the dim light which the best enjoyed under the Jewish dispensation. At any rate such as come to us in 'so questionable a shape,' ought not to be employed as the medium of a Christian's prayer.

When Jane entered the room, she found her aunt had begun her devotions, which were evidently more confused than usual; and when she said (her voice wrought up to the highest pitch) "Lo! thine enemies, O Lord! lo, thine enemies shall perish: all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered; but my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of a unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil: mine eye also shall see my desire on my enemies, and my ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me;" Jane perceived, from her unusual emotion, that she must allude to something that touched her own affairs, and she conjectured that she had already discovered the robbery. Her conjectures were strengthened when she observed, that, during the breakfast, her aunt seemed very much agitated; but she was at a loss to account for the look she darted on her, when one of the children said, "How your hair looks, Jane; this is the first time I ever saw you come to breakfast without combing it."

Jane replied, that she had overslept.

"You look more," said Elvira, "as if you had been watching all night, and crying too, I should imagine, from the redness of your eyes—and now I think of it," she added, regard-



less of Jane's embarrassment, "I am sure I heard your door shut in the night, and you walking about your room."

Jane was more confused by the expression of her aunt's face, than by her cousin's observations. What, thought she, can I have done to provoke her? I certainly have done nothing; but there is never a storm in the family, without my bidding some of its pitiless pelting.

After breakfast, the family dispersed, as usual, excepting Mrs. Wilson, David, and Jane, who remained to assist her aunt in removing the breakfast apparatus. Mrs. Wilson, neither wishing nor able any longer to restrain her wrath, went up to her desk, and taking hold of a pocket handkerchief which appeared to lie on the top of it, but which, as she stretched it out, showed one end caught and fastened in the desk—"Do you know this handkerchief, Jane Elton?" she said, in a voice choking with passion.

"Yes, ma'am," replied Jane, turning pale—"it is mine." She ventured, as she spoke, to look at David. His eyes were fixed on a newspaper, he seemed to be reading; not a muscle of his face moved, nor was there the slightest trace of emotion.

"Yours," said Mrs. Wilson; "that you could not deny, for your name is at full length on it; and when did you have it last?"

"Last night, ma'am."

"And who has robbed me of five hundred dollars? Can you answer to that?"

Jane made no reply. She saw, that her aunt's suspicions rested on her, and she perceived, at once, the cruel dilemma in which she had involved herself by her promise to David.

"Answer me that," repeated Mrs. Wilson, violently.

"That I cannot answer you, ma'am."



“And you mean to deny that you have taken it yourself?”

“Certainly I do, ma'am,” replied Jane, firmly, for she had now recovered her self-possession. “I am perfectly innocent; and I am sure that, whatever appearances there may be against me, you cannot believe me guilty—you do not.”

“And do you think to face me down in this way? I have evidence enough to satisfy any court of justice. Was not you heard up in the night—your guilty face told the story, at breakfast, plainer than words could tell it. David,” she continued to her son, who had thrown down the paper and walked to the window, where he stood with his back to his mother, affecting to whistle to a dog without; “David, I call you to witness this handkerchief, and what has now been said; and remember, she does not deny that she left it here.”

One honest feeling had a momentary ascendancy in David's bosom; and he had risen from his seat with the determination to disclose the truth, but he was checked by the recollection that he should be compelled to restore the money, which he had not yet disposed of. He thought, too, that his mother knew, in her heart, who had taken the money; that she would not dare to disclose her loss, and if she did, it would be time enough for him to interpose when Jane should be in danger of suffering otherwise than in the opinion of his mother, whose opinion, he thought, not worth caring for. Therefore, when called upon by his mother, he made no reply, but turning round and facing the accuser and the accused, he looked as composed as any uninterested spectator.

Mrs. Wilson proceeded, “Restore me my money, or abide the consequences.”

“The consequences I must abide, and I do not fear them



nor shrink from them, for I am innocent, and God will protect me."

At this moment they were interrupted by the entrance of Edward Erskine; and our poor heroine, though the instant before she had felt assured and tranquil in her panoply divine, burst into tears, and left the room. She could not endure the thought of degradation in Erskine's esteem; and she was very sure that her aunt would not lose such an opportunity of robbing her of his good opinion. She did not mistake. Mrs. Wilson closed the door after Jane; and seating herself, all unused as she was to the melting mood, gave way to a passion of tears and sobs, which were, as we think, a sincere tribute to the loss she had experienced.

"For Heaven's sake, tell me what is the matter?" said Erskine to young Wilson; for his impatience for an explanation became irrepressible, not on account of the old woman's emotion, for she might have wept till she was like Niobe, all tears, without provoking an inquiry, but Jane's distress had excited his anxiety.

"The Lord knows," replied David; "there is always a storm in this house;" and he flung out of the room without vouchsafing a more explicit answer.

Erskine turned to Mrs. Wilson: "Can you tell me, madam, what has disturbed Miss Elton?"

Mrs. Wilson was provoked that he did not ask what had disturbed her, and she determined he should not remain another moment without the communication, which she had been turning over in her mind to get it in the most efficient form.

"Oh! Mr. Erskine," she said, with the abject whine of a hypocrite; "oh! my trial is more than I can endure. I could bear they should devour me and lay waste my dwelling-



place; I could be supported under that; but it is a grief too heavy for me to reveal to you the sin, and the disgrace, and the abomination, of one that I have brought up as my own—who has fed upon my children's bread."

"Madam," interrupted Erskine, "you may spare yourself and me any more words. I ask for the cause of all this excitement?"

Mrs. Wilson would have replied angrily to what she thought Erskine's impertinence; but, remembering that it was her business to conciliate not offend him, she, after again almost exhausting his patience by protestations of the hardship of being obliged to uncover the crimes of her relation, of the affliction she suffered in doing her duty, &c., &c., told him with every aggravation that emphasis and insinuation could lend to them, the particulars of her discovery.

With unusual self-command he heard her through; and though he was unable to account for the suspicious circumstances, he spurned instinctively the conclusion Mrs. Wilson drew from them.

Her astonishment, that he neither expressed horror, nor indignation, nor resentment towards the offender, was not at all abated when he only replied by a request to speak alone with Miss Elton.

Mrs. Wilson thought he might intend the gathering storm should burst on Jane's head; or, perhaps, he would advise her to fly; at any rate, it was not her cue, to lay a straw in his way at present. She even went herself and gave the request to Jane, adding to it a remark, that as she "was not very fond of keeping out of Erskine's way, she could hardly refuse to come when asked."

"I have no wish to refuse;" replied Jane, who, ashamed of having betrayed so much emotion, had quite recovered her



self-possession, and stood calm in conscious integrity—"But hear me, ma'am," said she to her aunt, who had turned and was leaving the room—"all connection between us is dissolved for ever; I shall not remain another night beneath a roof where I have received little kindness, and where I now suffer the imputation of a crime, of which I am certain you do not believe me guilty."

Mrs. Wilson was for a moment daunted by the power of unquestionable innocence.—"I know not where I shall go, I know not whether your persecutions will follow me; but I am not friendless—nor fearful."

She passed by her aunt, and descended to the parlour. 'No thought infirm altered her cheek;" her countenance was very serious, but the peace of virtue was there. Her voice did not falter in the least, when she said to Edward, as he closed the door on her entrance into the parlour—"Mr. Erskine, you have no doubt requested to see me in the expectation that I would contradict the statement my aunt must have made to you. I cannot, for it is all true."

Edward interrupted her—"I do not wish it, Jane. I believe you are perfectly innocent of that and of every other crime—I do not wish you even to deny it. It is all a devilish contrivance of that wicked woman."

"You are mistaken, Edward; it is not a contrivance; the circumstances are as she has told them to you: Elvira did not mistake in supposing she heard me up in the night; and my aunt did find my handkerchief in her desk. No, Edward: she is right in all but the conclusion she draws from these unfortunate circumstances; perhaps," she added after a moment's pause, "a kinder judgment would not absolve me."

"A saint," replied Edward cheerily, "needs no absolution. No one shall be permitted to accuse you, or suspect



you; you can surely explain these accidental circumstances, so that even your aunt, malicious—venomous as she is, will not dare to breathe a poisonous insinuation against you, angel as you are.”

“Ah,” replied Jane, with a sad smile, “there are and there ought to be, few believers in earthborn angels. No, Mr. Erskine, I have no explanation to make: I have nothing but assertions of my innocence, and my general character to rely upon. Those who reject this evidence must believe me guilty.”

She rose to leave the room. Erskine gently drew her back, and asked if it were possible she included him among those who could be base enough to distrust her; and before she could reply he went on to a passionate declaration of his affections, followed by such promises of eternal truth, love, and fidelity, as are usual on such occasions.

At another time, Jane would have paused to examine her heart, before she accepted the profession made by her lover, and she would have found no tenderness there that might not be controlled and subdued by reason. But now, driven out from her natural protectors by suspicion and malignant accusation, and touched by the confiding affection that refused to suspect her; the generosity, the magnanimity that were presented in such striking contrast to the baseness of her relations—she received Edward’s declaration with the most tender and ingenuous expression of gratitude; and Erskine did not doubt, nor did Jane at that moment, that this gratitude was firmly rooted in love.

Edward, ardent and impetuous, proposed an immediate marriage: he argued, that it was the only, and would be an effectual, way of protecting her from the persecutions of her aunt.



Jane replied, that she had very little reason to fear that her aunt would communicate to any other person her suspicions. "She had a motive towards you," she added, "that overcame her prudence. I have found a refuge in your heart, and she cannot injure me while I have that asylum. I have too much pride, Edward, to involve you in the reproach I may have to sustain. I had formed a plan this morning, before your generosity translated me from despondency to hope, which I must adhere to, for a few months at least. An application has been made to me to teach some little girls who are not old enough for Mr. Evertson's school: my aunt, as usual, put in her veto; I had almost made up my mind to accept the proposal in spite of it, when the events of the morning came to my aid, and decided me at once, and I have already announced to my aunt my determination to leave her house. I trust that in few months something will occur, to put me beyond the reach of suspicion, and reward as well as justify your generous confidence."

Edward entreated—protested—argued—but all in vain; he was obliged at length to resign his will to Jane's decision. Edward's next proposal was to announce the engagement immediately. On this he insisted so earnestly, and offered for it so many good reasons, that Jane consented. Mrs. Wilson was summoned to the parlour, and informed of the issue of the conference, of which she had expected so different a termination. She was surprised—mortified—and most of all, wrathful—that her impotent victim, as she deemed Jane, should be rescued from her grasp. She began the most violent threats and reproaches. Edward interrupted her by telling her that she dare not repeat the first, and from the last her niece would soon be for ever removed; as he should require they should in future be perfect strangers.



Mrs. Wilson felt like a wild animal just encaged; she might lash herself to fury, but no one heeded her.

Edward left the room, saying, that he should send his servant to convey Jane's baggage wherever she would order it to be sent. Jane went quietly to her own apartment, to make the necessary arrangements; there she soon overheard the low growlings of Mrs. Wilson's angriest voice, communicating, as she inferred from the loud responsive exclamations and whimpering, her engagement to Elvira. Mrs. Wilson's perturbed spirit was not quieted even by this outpouring; and after walking up and down, scolding at the servant and the children, she put on her hat and shawl, and sallied out to a shop, to pay a small debt she owed there. No passion could exclude from her mind for any length of time the memory of so disagreeable a circumstance as the necessity of paying out money. After she had discharged the debt, and the master of the shop had given her the change, he noticed her examining one of the bills he had handed her with a look of scrutiny and some agitation. He said, "I believe that is a good bill, Mrs. Wilson; I was a little suspicious of it too at first; I took it, this morning, from your son David, in payment of a debt that has been standing more than a year. I thought myself so lucky to get any thing, that I was not very particular."

Mrs. Wilson's particularity seemed to have a sudden quietus, for she pushed the bill into the full purse after the others, muttering something about the folly of trusting boys being rightly punished by the loss of the debt.

The fact was, that Mrs. Wilson recognized this bill the moment she saw it, as one of the parcel she had received the day before, and which she had marked, at the time, for she was eagle-eyed in the detection of a spurious bill. There is nothing



more subtle, more inveterate than a habit of self-deception. It was not to the world alone that Mrs. Wilson played the hypocrite, but before the tribunal of her own conscience she appeared with hollow arguments and false pretences. From the moment she had discovered her loss in the morning, she had, at bottom, believed David guilty; she recollected the threats of the preceding day, and her first impulse was to charge him with the theft, and to demand the money; but then, she thought, he was violent and determined, and that without exposing him (even Mrs. Wilson shrunk from the consequences of exposure to her son), she could not regain her money. She was at a loss how to account for the appearance of Jane's handkerchief; but neither that, nor Jane's subsequent emotion at the breakfast table, nor her refusal to make any explanation of the suspicious circumstances, enabled Mrs. Wilson to believe that Jane had borne any part in the dishonesty of the transaction. Such was the involuntary tribute she paid to the tried, steadfast virtue of this excellent being. Still she could not restrain the whirlwind of her passion; and it burst, as we have seen, upon Jane. She was at a loss to account for Jane's refusal to vindicate herself. It was impossible for her to conceive of the reasons that controlled Jane. She could not see up to such an elevation. She felt so fearful, at first, that any investigation would lead to the discovery of the real criminal, that she had not communicated the fact of the handkerchief to any one, even to Elvira; whose discretion, indeed, she never trusted; but, after she found that Jane was in a dilemma, from which she would not extricate herself by any explanations, she thought herself the mistress of her niece's fate; and the moment she saw Erskine, she determined to extract good out of the evil that had come upon her, to dim the lustre of Jane's good



name, that 'more immediate Jewel of her soul,' and thus to secure for her daughter the contested prize. But Mrs. Wilson, it seems, was destined to experience, on this eventful day, how very hard is the way of the transgressor. Her niece's fortunes were suddenly placed beyond her control or reach; and nothing remained of all her tyranny and plots, but the pitiful and malignant pleasure of believing, that Jane thought herself in some measure in her power, though she knew that she was not.

After the confirmation of her conjecture at the shop, she saw that secrecy was absolutely necessary; and she was too discreet to indulge herself with telling Elvira any of the particulars, about which she had been so vociferous to the young lovers.

Perhaps few ladies, old or young, were ever less encumbered with baggage than Jane Elton, and yet, so confused was she with the events of the night and morning, that the labour of packing up, which at another time she would have despatched in twenty minutes, seemed to have no more tendency to a termination than such labours usually have in dreams. In the midst of her perplexities one of the children entered and said Mr. Lloyd wished to speak to her. She was on the point of sending him an excuse, for she felt an involuntary disinclination to meet his penetrating eye at this moment, when recollecting how much she owed to his constant, tender friendship, she subdued her reluctance, and obeyed his summons. When she entered the room, "I am come," said he, "Jane, to ask thee to walk with me. I am an idler and have nothing to do, and thou art so industrious thou hast time to do every thing. Come, get thy hat. It is 'treason against nature' sullenly to refuse to enjoy so beautiful a day as this." Jane made no reply. He saw she was agitated, and leading



her gently to a chair, said, "I fear thou art not well, or, what is much worse, not happy."

Jane would have replied, "I am not;" but she checked the words, for she felt as if the sentiment they expressed, was a breach of fidelity to Erskine; and instead of them she said, hesitatingly, "I ought not to be perfectly happy till my best (I should say one of my best) friends knows and approves what I have done this morning."

"What hast thou done, Jane?" exclaimed Mr. Lloyd, anticipating from her extraordinary embarrassment and awkwardness the communication she was about to make; "hast thou engaged thyself to Erskine?"

She faltered out, "Yes."

Mr. Lloyd made no reply: he rose and walked up and down the room, agitated, and apparently distressed. Jane was alarmed; she could not account for his emotion; she feared he had some ground for an ill opinion of Edward, that she was ignorant of. "You do not like Edward?" said she; "you think I have done wrong?"

The power of man is not limited in the moral as in the natural world. Habitual discipline had given Mr. Lloyd such dominion over his feelings, that he was able now to say to their stormy wave, 'thus far shalt thou come, and no farther.' By a strong and sudden effort he recovered himself, and turning to Jane, he took her hand with a benignant expression—"My dear Jane, thy own heart must answer that question. Dost thou remember a favourite stanza of thine?

"Nae treasures nor pleasures  
Could make us happy lang;  
The heart aye's the part aye  
That makes us right or wrang."



Jane imagined that Mr. Lloyd felt a distrust of her motives. "Ah!" she replied, "the integrity of my heart will fail to make me happy, if I have fallen under your suspicion. If you knew the nobleness, the disinterestedness of Erskine's conduct, you would be more just to him, and to me."

"It is not being very unjust to him, or to any one, to think him unworthy of thee, Jane. But since these particulars would raise him so much in my opinion, why not tell them to me? May not 'one of your best friends' claim to know, that which affects, so deeply, your happiness?"

Jane began a reply, but hesitated, and faltered out something of its being impossible for her to display to Mr. Lloyd, Erskine's generosity in the light she saw it.

"Dost thou mean, Jane, that the light of truth is less favourable to him than the light of imagination?"

"No," answered Jane; "such virtues as Edward's, shine with a light of their own; imagination cannot enhance their value."

"Still," said Mr. Lloyd, "they shine but on one happy individual. Well, my dear Jane," he continued, after a few moments' pause, "I will believe without seeing. I will believe thou hast good reasons for thy faith, though they are incommunicable. If Erskine make thee happy, I shall be satisfied."

Happily for both parties, this very unsatisfactory conference was broken off by the entrance of Erskine's servant, who came, as he said, for Miss Elton's baggage. Jane explained, as concisely as possible, to Mr. Lloyd, her plans for the present, and then took advantage of this opportunity to retreat to her own apartment, which she had no sooner entered than she gave way to a flood of tears, more bitter than any her aunt's injustice had cost her. She had, previous to her inter-



view with Mr. Lloyd, determined not to disclose to him, or Mary Hull, the disagreeable affair of the robbery. She wished to spare them the pain which the knowledge of a perplexity from which they could not extricate her, must give to them. She was sure Mary, whose discernment was very quick, and who knew David well, would, at once, suspect him; and therefore, she thought, that in telling the story, she should violate the spirit of her promise; and, at bottom, she felt a lurking apprehension that Mr. Lloyd might think there was more of gratitude than affection in her feelings to Erskine; she thought it possible, too, he might not estimate Edward's magnanimity quite as highly as she did; for "though," she said, "Mr. Lloyd has the fairest mind in the world, I think he has never liked Erskine. They are, certainly, very different"—and she sighed as she concluded her deliberations.

Mr. Lloyd, after remaining for a few moments in the posture Jane had left him, returned to his own home, abstracted and sad. 'The breath of Heaven smelt as wooingly,' and the sun shone as brightly as before, but there was now no feeling of joy within to vibrate to the beauty without; and he certainly could not be acquitted of the 'sullen neglect of nature, that he had deemed treason an hour before.

"I knew," thought he, "she was fallible, and why should I be surprised at her failure? It cannot be Erskine, but the creature of her imagination, that she loves. She is too young to possess the Ithuriel touch that dissolves false appearances: she could not detect, under so specious a garb, the vanity and selfishness that counterfeit manly pride and benevolence. If he were but worthy of her, I should be perfectly happy."

Mr. Lloyd mistook; he would not, even in that case, have been perfectly happy. He did not, though he was very much of a self-examiner, clearly define all his feelings on this trying



occasion. He had loved Jane first as a child, and then as a sister; and of late he had thought if he could love another woman, as a wife, it would be Jane Elton. But his lost Rebecca was more present to his imagination than any living being. He had formed no project for himself in relation to Jane; yet he would have felt disappointment at her appropriation to any other person, though, certainly, not the sorrow which her engagement to Erskine occasioned him. Mr. Lloyd was really a disinterested man. He had so long made it a rule to imitate the Parent of the universe, in still educing good from evil, that, in every trial of his life, it was his first aim to ascertain his duty, and then to perform it. He could weave the happiness of others, though no thread of his own was in the fabric. In the present case, he resolved still to watch over Jane; to win the friendship of Erskine, to endeavor to rectify his principles, to exert over him an insensible influence, and, if possible, to render him more worthy of his enviable destiny.

In the course of the day, Mary Hull heard the rumours that had already spread through the village, of Jane's removal to Mrs. Harvey's, and her engagement. She ran to the library door, and in the fulness of her heart, forgetful of the decorum of knocking, she entered and found Mr. Lloyd sitting with his little girl on his knee. "Mary, I am glad to see thee," said the child; "I cannot get a word from father; he is just as if he was asleep, only his eyes are wide open."

Mary, regardless of the child's prattle, announced the news she had just heard. Mr. Lloyd coldly replied, that he knew it already; and Mary left the room, a little hurt that he had not condescended to tell her, and wondering what made him so indifferent, and then wondering whether it was indifference; but as she could not relieve her mind, she



resolved to go immediately to Jane, with whom the habits of their early lives, and her continued kindness, had given and established the right of free intercourse.

She found Jane alone, and not looking as happy as she expected. "You have come to give me joy, Mary," she said, smiling mournfully as she extended her hand to her friend.

"Yes," replied Mary, "I came with that intention, and you look as if joy was yet to be given. Well," she continued after a pause, "I always thought you and Mr. Lloyd were different from any body else in the world, but now you puzzle me more than ever. I expected to see your aunt Wilson look grum—that's natural to her, when any good befalls any one else; and Elvira, who every body knows has been setting her cap every way for Erskine, ever since she was old enough to think of a husband: she has a right to have her eyes as red as a ferret's. But there is Mr. Lloyd, looking as sorrowful as if he had seen some great trouble, and could not relieve it; and you, my dear child, I have seen you pass through many a dark passage of your life with a happier face than you wear now, when you are going to have the pride of the county for your husband, to be mistress of the beautiful house on the hill, and have every thing heart can desire."

Jane made no explanation nor reply, and after a few moments' consideration Mary proceeded—"To be sure, I could wish Erskine was more like Mr. Lloyd; but then he is six or eight years younger than Mr. Lloyd, and in that time, with your tutoring, you may make him a good deal like Mr. Lloyd (Mr. Lloyd was Mary's beau-ideal of a man); that is, if your endeavours are blessed. It is true, I always thought you would not marry any man that was not religious; not but what 'tis allowable, for even professors do it; but then, Jane, you are more particular and consistent than a great many



professors; and, I know, you think there is nothing binds hearts together like religion—that bond endures where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.”

Poor Jane had listened to Mary’s pros and cons with considerable calmness; but now she laid her head in her friend’s lap, and gave vent to the feelings she had been all day arguing down, by a flood of tears. “Ah! my dear Jane, is it *there* the shoe pinches? I an’t sorry to find you have thought of it though. If the ‘candle of the Lord’ is lighted up in the heart, we ought to look at every thing by that light. But now you have decided, turn to the bright side. I don’t know much about Mr. Erskine; he is called a nice young man, and who knows what he may become, when he sees how good and how beautiful it is to have the whole heart and life ordered and governed by the christian rule. I often think to myself, Jane, that your life, and Mr. Lloyd’s too, are better than preaching. Don’t take on so, my child,” she continued, soothingly; “you have Scripture for you; for the Bible says, ‘the believing wife may sanctify the unbelieving husband;’ and that must mean that her counsel and example shall win him back to the right way, and persuade him to walk in the paths of holiness. Cheer up, my child, there is good missionary work before you; and I feel as if you had many happy days to come yet. Those that sow in tears, shall reap with joy. It is a load off my mind, at any rate, that you are away from your aunt’s, and under good Mrs. Harvey’s roof. I stopped at your aunt’s on my way here, and she raised a hue and cry about your leaving her house so suddenly; she said, your grand fortune had turned your head; ‘she was not disappointed, she had never expected any gratitude from you! but ’twas not for worldly hire she did her duty!’ Poor, poor soul! I would not judge her uncharitably; but I do



believe she has the 'hope that will perish.' I just took no notice of her, and came away. As I was passing through the kitchen, Sukey says to me, 'Mrs. Wilson may look out for other *help*, for now Miss Jane is gone out from us, I shan't stay to hear nothing but disputings, and scoldings, and prayers.' 'But,' says I, 'Sukey, you don't object to the prayers?' 'Yes,' says she, 'I don't like lip prayers—it is nothing but a mockery.' ”

“ Sukey has too much reason,” replied Jane. “ But now, Mary, you must not think from what you have seen that I am not happy, for I have reason to be grateful, and I ought to be very, very happy.”

‘ *Ought*,’ thought Mary, ‘ she may be *contented*, and *resigned*, and even *cheerful*, because she *ought*—but happiness is not duty-work.’ However, she had discretion enough to suppress her homely metaphysics; and patting Jane’s head affectionately, she replied, “ Yes, my child, and if you wish it, I will set these tears down for tears of joy, not sorrow.” Jane smiled at her friend’s unwonted sophistry, and they parted: Mary, confirmed in a favourite notion, that every allotment of Providence is designed as a trial for the character; that all will finally work together for good; and that Jane was going on in the path to perfection, which, though no Methodist, she was not (in her partial friend’s opinion) far from attaining. Jane was very much relieved by Mary’s wise suggestions and sincere sympathy.

A sagacious observer of human nature and fortunes has said, that “ if there were more knowledge, there would be less envy.” The history of our heroine is a striking exemplification of the truth of this remark: when all was darkness without, she had been looked upon by the compassionate as an object of pity, for they could not see the sunshine of the



breast ; and now that she was considered as the chief favourite of the fickle goddess, there was not one that would have envied her, if the internal conflict she suffered—if that most unpleasant of all feelings, disagreement with herself, had been as visible as her external fortunes were.

Erskine was in too good humour with himself, and with Jane, to find fault with any thing : yet he certainly was a little disappointed, that in spite of his earnest persuasions to the contrary, she firmly persisted in the plan of the school ; and we fear he was surprised, perhaps slightly mortified, that she showed no more joy at having secured a hand and a station, to which he knew so many had aspired.



## CHAPTER XII.

The world is still deceived with ornament.  
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,  
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,  
Obscures the show of evil?

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

JANE entered upon the duties of her new vocation with more energy and interest than could have been reasonably expected from a young lady who had so recently entered into an engagement of marriage, and one which opened upon her the most flattering prospects. She already felt the benefits resulting from the severe discipline she had suffered in her aunt's family. She had a rare habit of putting *self* aside; of deferring her own inclinations to the will, and interests, and inclinations of others. A superficial survey of the human mind in all its diversity of conditions, will convince us that it may be trained to any thing; else, how shall we account for the proud exultation of a savage amidst the cruellest tortures his triumphant enemy can inflict; or for any of the wonderful phenomena of enterprise, of fortitude, of patience, in beings whose physical natures are so constituted, that they instinctively shrink from suffering?

Our fair young readers (if any of that class condescend



to read this unromantic tale) will smile at the idea that Jane had any farther occasion for the virtues of adversity; but she was far from being happy; she had not that firm confidence in the character of her lover that could alone have inspired the joy of hope, and secured a quiet spirit. Since her engagement, and even before, and ever since she had been interested in Erskine, she had not dared to sound the depths of her heart. Though quite a novice in the experience of love, she would have been able to detect its subtleties; she would have been able to ascertain the nature, and amount of her affection for Erskine, had she not been driven by his apparent magnanimity, and the oppression of her relations, to a sudden decision. We appeal then once more to our fair young readers, and trust their justice will award to our heroine some praise, for her spirited and patient performance of her duties to her young pupils, who were very far from imagining that their kind and gentle teacher had any thing in the world to trouble her, or to engage her mind, but their wants and pursuits.

Her disquietude did not escape the quickened vision of her vigilant friend Mr. Lloyd; he observed the shadows of anxiety settling on her usually bright and cheerful countenance, but even he had no conception of the extent of her busy apprehensions and secret misgivings.

Week after week passed away, and there seemed to be no prospect that any thing would occur to free Jane from the very unpleasant situation in which her aunt's accusations had placed her. Erskine became restless and impatient, derided all Jane's arguments in favor of delaying their marriage, and finally affected to distrust her affection for him. If the undefined, and undefinable sentiment which was compounded in Jane's heart of youthful preference and gratitude, was not



love, Jane believed it was, and she at last yielded a reluctant consent, that the marriage should take place at the end of three months, even though nothing should occur to release her from her aunt's power.

It was a few days after this promise had been given, that as she was one day returning from her school, Erskine joined her.—“Your friend Robert Lloyd,” said he, “has taken a mighty fancy to me of late—I cannot conceive what is the reason of it.”

Jane blushed, for she thought he might have guessed the reason. “I am glad of it,” she replied, “for he seems to have withdrawn from me, and you are the only person, Edward, to whom I should be willing to relinquish any portion of Mr. Lloyd's regard.”

“Ah, Jane! you need not be alarmed; he and I should never mix, any more than oil and vinegar.”

“I am sorry for that; but which is the oil, and which is the vinegar?”

“Oh, he is the oil, soft—neutralizing—rather tasteless; while I, you know, have a character of my own—am positive—am—but perhaps it would not be quite modest for me to finish the parallel. To confess the truth to you, Jane, I have always had an aversion to Quakers; they are a very hypocritical sect, depend upon it; pretending, sly, avaricious, cheating rogues.”

“That's a harsh judgment,” replied Jane, with some warmth, “and a prejudice, I think: is not Mr. Lloyd the only Quaker you know?”

“Why—ye—yes, the only one I know much of.”

“And does he justify your opinion?”

“I don't know: it takes a great while to find them out; and even if Lloyd should be what he would seem, the



exception only proves the rule. I have always disliked Quakers. I remember a story my father used to tell, when I was a child, about his being overreached in a most ingenious, practised manner, by one of the sly-boots, as he called the whole race. It was not an affair of any great moment; but no man likes to be outwitted in a bargain, and my father used to say it gave him an antipathy to the very name of a Quaker."

"I think your father was in fault," replied Jane, "so carelessly to implant a prejudice, which, as it seems to have had very slight ground, I trust has not taken such deep root that it cannot be eradicated."

"There is more reason in my judgment than you give me credit for," replied Edward pettishly. "If they are an upright, frank people, why is the world kept in ignorance of their belief? The Quakers have no creed; and though I have no great faith in the professors of any sect, yet they ought to let you know what they do think; it is fair and above board. You may depend upon it, Jane, the Quakers are a jesuitical people."

"Have you ever read any of their books?" inquired Jane.

"I read them!" he replied, laughing; "why, my dear girl, do you take me for a theologian? No—I never read the books of any sect; and Quaker books, I believe there are not. Quaker books!" he continued, still laughing, "no, no—I shall never addict myself to divinity, till Ann Ratcliffe writes sermons, and Tom Moore warbles hymns."

Jane did not join in his laugh; but replied, "There is a book, Edward, that contains the creed of the Quakers: a creed to which they have never presumed to add any thing, nor have they taken any thing from it; the only creed to which they think it right to require the assent of man, and



from which no rational man can dissent—that book is *the Bible!* and,” she continued, earnestly, “their faith in this creed is shown by their works. My dear Edward, examine their history for their vindication.”

“That I need not, while their cause has so fair a champion.”

“Spare me your sarcasms, Edward, and let me entreat you to look at the life of their wise and excellent Penn. See him patiently and firmly enduring persecution, and calumny, and oppression at home; giving up his time, his fortune, his liberty, to the cause of suffering humanity, in every mode of its appeal to his benevolence. Follow him with his colony to the wilderness, and see him the only one of all the colonial leaders, (I grieve that I cannot except our fathers, the pilgrims)\* the only one who treated the natives of the land with justice and mercy. Our fathers, Edward, refused to acknowledge the image of God in the poor Indian. They affected to believe they were the children of the evil one, and hunted them like beasts of prey, calling them ‘worse than Scythian wolves;’ while Penn, and his peaceful people, won their confidence, their devotion, by treating them with even-handed justice, with brotherly kindness; and they had their reward; they lived unharmed among them, without

\* Since this edition was put to press, a friend has been good enough to furnish us with the following correction of a mistake, for which we are much indebted to him, and which we gladly insert.

“The assertion, that Penn was the only one of the colonial leaders, who *treated the natives with justice and mercy*, should be qualified. The lands of the natives were not seized, but purchased in every part of New-England, and, I believe, on more favorable terms here than in Pennsylvania. The greatest part of our colonial leaders *treated the natives with mercy*; in particular Winthrop, Winslow, and Bradford, but above all, Thomas Mayhew and Roger Williams.



forts, without a weapon of defence. Is it not the Friends that have been foremost and most active in efforts for the abolition of slavery? Among what people do we find most reformers of the prisons—guardians of the poor and the oppressed—most of those who ‘remember the forgotten, and attend to the neglected—who dive into the depths of dungeons, and plunge into the infection of hospitals?’ ”

There was a mingled expression of archness and admiration in Edward’s smile as he replied, “My dear Jane, you are almost fit to speak in meeting. All that your defence wants in justness, is made up by the eloquence of your eye and your glowing cheek. I think friendship is a stronger feeling in your heart than love, Jane,” he continued, with a penetrating look that certainly did not abate the carnation of her cheek. “If I, and all my ancestors had gone on crusades and pilgrimages, the spirit would not have moved you to such enthusiasm in our cause, as you manifest for the broad-brimmed, straight-coated brethren of *friend Lloyd*.”

“Edward, have you yet to learn of me, that I speak least of what I feel most?”

The gentleness of Jane’s manner, and the tenderness of her voice, soothed her lover; and he replied, “Forgive me, dear Jane, a little jealousy; you know jealousy argues love. To confess to you the honest truth, I felt a little more ticklish than usual, this evening, on the subject of quakerism. I had just parted with Mr. Lloyd; and he has been earnestly recommending to me, to undertake a reform in our poor-laws, by which he thinks, that we should rid ourselves of the burden of supporting many who are not necessarily dependent on us, and improve the condition of those who are. The plan seems to me to be good and feasible.”

“And what then, Edward, provoked your displeasure?”



“Why, he wished me to take the whole conduct of it. He preferred that the plan should appear to originate with me; that I should head a petition to the Legislature; and if we succeeded, that I shall superintend the execution of the plan.”

“Still, dear Edward, I see any thing but offence in all this.”

“Because your eye-sight is a little dimmed by your partiality. Do you believe, Jane, that any man would be willing to transfer to another all the merit and praise of a scheme, which, if it succeed, will be a most important benefit to the community; will be felt, and noticed, and applauded by every body? No—there is some design lurking under this specious garb of disinterestedness—disinterestedness! it only exists in the visions of poets, or the Utopian dreams of youth; or, perhaps, embodied in the fine person of a hero of romance.”

Oh! my dear Edward, it does exist; it is the principle, the spirit of the Christian!”

“*For example*—of your aunt Wilson, and of sundry other stanch professors I could mention, who,

“‘If *self* the wavering balance shake,  
It’s *never* right adjusted.’”

“Is it fair,” replied Jane, “to condemn a whole class because some of its members are faithless and disloyal? A commander does but *decimate* a mutinous corps; and you exclude the whole from your confidence, because a few are treacherous. I allow,” continued Jane, “there are a few, very few, who are perfectly disinterested; but every Christian, in proportion to his fidelity to the teachings and exam-



ple of his Master, will be moved and governed by this principle."

Perhaps Edward felt a passing conviction of the truth of Jane's assertions; at any rate, he made no reply, and afterwards he shunned the subject; and even Jane seemed to shrink from it as one upon which they had no common feeling.

The day before entering on the duties of her second school-term, Jane determined to indulge herself in a solitary walk to the cottage of old John of the Mountain. She had purchased some comforts for the old people, with a part of her small earnings, and she knew if she carried them herself she should double their value. She found the way without difficulty, for her night-walk had indelibly impressed it on her memory. On her approach to the cottage, and as she emerged from the wood, she perceived just on its verge a slight rising in the form of a grave; a wild rose-bush grew beside it. Jane paused for a moment, and plucking one of the flowers, she said, "fragrant and transient, thou art a fit emblem of the blasted flower below!" As she turned from the grave, she perceived that a magical change had been wrought upon John's hut. Instead of a scarcely habitable dwelling, of decayed logs, filled in with mud, she saw a neat little framed house, with a fence around it, and a small garden annexed to it, inclosed with a post and rail fence of neat construction. Jane hastened forward, and entered the cottage with the light step of one who goes on an errand of kindness.

"Who would have thought," said the good dame, as she dusted a chair and handed it to Jane, "of your coming all this way to see whether we were above ground yet?"

"Ah," said John, 'there are some in this world, a pre-



cious few, who remember those that every body else forgets."

"I could not forget you, my good friends," replied Jane, "though John does not come any more to put me in mind of you."

"Why, Miss Jane," said John, "I grow old, and I have been but twice to the village since that mournful night you was here, and then I was in such a worrying matter that I did not think even of you."

"What have you had to disturb you?" inquired Jane. "I hoped from finding you in this nice new house that all had gone well since I saw you."

"Ah," replied John, "I have been greatly favoured; but the storm came before the calm. Miss Jane, did you never hear of my *law-suit*? the whole town was alive with it."

Jane assured John that she had never heard a word of it; that she had a little school to take care of; and that she saw very few persons, and heard little village news, even when it was as important as his law-suit.

"Then, Miss Jane," said John, "if you have time and patience to hear an old man's story, I will tell you mine. It is fifty years since my old woman and I settled down in these woods. Like all our fellow-creatures, we have had our portion of storms and sunshine: it has pleased the Lord to lop off all our branches, to cut down the little saplings that grew up at our feet, and leave us two lonely and bare trunks, to feel, and resist the winds of heaven as we may: two old evergreens," he continued, with a melancholy smile, "that flourish when every thing has faded about them. Yes, fifty years I have seen the sun come over that mountain every morning; and there is not a tree in all these thick woods but it seems like an old friend to me. Here my sons



and daughters have been born to me, and here I have buried them, all but poor Jem, who you know was lost at sea. They died when they were but little children, and nobody remembers them but us ; but they are as fresh in our minds as if it was but yesterday they were playing about us, with their laughing eyes and rosy cheeks. This has not much to do with my lawsuit," continued John, after a pause, and clearing his voice, "only that I shall want some excuse for loving the old spot so well before I get through with my story. I hired this bit of land of a man that's been dead twenty years, and it has changed hands many a time since, but I have always been able to satisfy for the rent ; it was but a trifle, for no one but I would fancy the place. Lately it's come into the hands of the two young Woodhulls, by the death of the Deacon their father. They are two hard-favoured, hard-hearted, wild young chaps, Miss Jane, that think all the world was made for them, and their pleasure. If my memory serves me, it was just one week after you was here, that they were up hunting in these woods with young Squire Erskine. John, the eldest, took aim at a robin that was singing on the tree just before my door : it had built its nest there early in the summer : we had fed it with crumbs from our table, and it was as tame as a chicken. I told this to them, and begged the little innocent's life so earnestly, that the boys laughed, but Erskine said, 'Let the old man have his way.' They said it was nonsense to give up to my whims, and told me to take away my hand, (for I had raised it up to protect the nest,) or they would fire through it. I did take it away, and the nest with it, and brought it into the house. They came swearing in, and demanded the bird. I refused to give it up ; they grew more and more angry : may be Erskine might have brought them to reason, but he had walked away.



They said it was their land, and their bird, and they would not be thwarted by me; and they called me, and my wife too, many a name that was too bad for a decent person's ear. They worked themselves up to a fury, and then warned me off the ground. I made no reply; for I thought when they got over their passion they'd forget it. But they returned the next day with handspikes, and threatened to pull the house down on our heads, if we did not come out of it. I have had a proud spirit in my day, Miss Jane, but old age and weakness have tamed it. I begged them to spare us our little dwelling, with tears in my eyes; and my poor old woman prayed she might bring out the few *goods* we had; but oh! 'a fool in his folly is like a bear robbed of her whelps.' They said they would dust our *goods* for us; and so we came out and turned away our faces; but we heard the old house that had sheltered us so long crumble to pieces, as you would crush an egg-shell in your hand; yes, and we heard their loud deriding laugh; but thank the Lord, we were too far off, to hear the jokes they passed between every peal of laughter. Ah, there is more hope of any thing than of a hard heart in a young body."

"Can it be possible," interrupted Jane, "that for so slight a cause the Woodhulls could do you such an injury?"

"It is even so," replied John; "youth is headstrong, and will not bear crossing."

"But where did you find a shelter?"

"I led my wife down the other side of the mountain, to one Billy Downie's, a soft feeling creature, who has more goodness in his heart than wit in his head, and he made us kindly welcome. I left my wife there, and the next day I came over to the village, to see if the law would give me justice of those that had no mercy. I should have gone to



Squire Erskine with my case, for I knew he was called a fine pleader, though he is too wordy to suit me—but he was a friend of the Woodhulls, and so I applied to the stranger that's lately moved in: he proved a raw hand. The trial was appointed for the next Saturday. The day came; and all the men in the village were collected at the tavern, for Erskine was to plead for the Woodhulls, and every body likes to hear his silver tongue."

"Erskine plead for the Woodhulls!" exclaimed Jane.

"Oh yes, Miss Jane; for, as I told you, they are very thick. My attorney was a kind of a 'prentice-workman at the law; he was afraid of Erskine too; and he stammered, and said one thing and meant another, and made such a jingle of it, I could not wonder the justice and the people did not think I had a good claim for damages. But still, the plain story was so much against the Woodhulls, and the people of the village are so friendly-like to me, that it is rather my belief I should have been righted, if Erskine had not poured out such a power of words, that he seemed to take away people's senses. He started with what he called a proverb of the law, and repeated it so many times, I think I can never forget it, for it seemed to be the hook he hung all his arguing upon. It was '*cujus est solum, ejus est usque ad cælum*,' (we have taken the liberty slightly to correct the old man's quotation of the Latin;) which, if I rightly understood it, means, that whoever owns the soil, owns all above it to the sky; and though it stands to reason it can't be so, yet Erskine's fine oration put reason quite out of the question; and so the justice decided that the Woodhulls had a right to do what seemed good in their own eyes with my furniture; and then he gave me a bit of an exhortation, and told me I should never make out well in the world, if I did not know more of



the laws of the land ! and concluded with saying, I ought to be very thankful I had so little to be destroyed. I said nothing ; but I thought it was late in the day for me to study the laws of the land ; and my mite was as much to me as his abundance to him. When the trial was over, Erskine and the Woodhulls invited the justice and the company in the bar-room to treat them ; and through the open door I heard Erskine propose a bumper to those who knew how to maintain their rights. “No,” Woodhull said, “it should be to him who knew how to defend a friend”—right or wrong, thought I. But,” said John, pausing, “my story is too long for you Miss Jane.”

Jane had turned away her head ; she now assured John she was listening to every word he said, and begged him to go on.

“Well, miss, I thought I was alone in the room, and I just let out my heart, as you know a body will when he thinks there is no eye but His that’s above, sees him. I saw nothing before Sarah and I, but to go upon the town, and that’s what I always had a dread of ; for, though I have been a poor man all my life, Miss Jane, what I had was my own. I have been but weakly since I was a boy, but my woman and I have been sober and industrious. We have always had a shelter for ourselves ; and sometimes, too, for a poor houseless creature that had not a better ; and we wanted but little, and we were independent : and then you know, what the town gives is neither given or taken with a good will. Well, as I said, I thought I was alone in the room ; but I heard a slight noise behind me, and there was one who had not followed the multitude ; he had a clear open face, and *that look*—I can’t justly describe it, Miss Jane, but it seems as if it was the light of good deeds sent back again ; or, may be, the seal the



Lord puts upon his own children—and pity and kindness seemed writ in every line of his face. Do you know who I mean ?”

“Mr. Lloyd,” she replied, in a scarcely audible voice.

“Yes, yes—any body that had ever seen him would guess. He beckoned to me to shut the door, and asked me if I had any particular attachment to this spot ; and I owned to him, as I have to you, my childishness about it ; and he smiled, and said he was afraid I was too old to be cured of it ; and then asked, if I believed I could persuade the young men to sell as much of the land as I should want. I was sure I could, for I know they are wasteful and ravenous for money, and besides they had had their own will, and the land was of no use to them. And then he told me, Miss Jane, that he would give me the money for the land, if I could make a bargain with the Woodhulls, and enough besides to build me a comfortable little house. I could not thank him—I tried, but I could not ; and so he just squeezed my hand and said, he understood me—and charged me to keep it a secret where I got help ; and I have minded him till this day, but I could not keep it from you.”

“You’d better stop now, John,” said the old woman, “for the long walk, and the long story, have quite overdone Miss Jane ; she looks tired out, and pale and red in a minute.”

Jane was obliged to own she did not feel well ; but after drinking some water, she made an effort to compose herself, and asked the old man, “What reason he had to think the Woodhulls and Erskine were intimate friends ?”

“Why, did you never hear, miss, that it was Erskine that got John Woodhull clear when Betsy Davis sued him for breach of promise ? I was summoned to court as a witness. It was a terrible black business ; but Erskine made it all smooth ; and after the trial was past, I overheard these chaps



flattering Erskine till they made him believe he was more than mortal. At any rate, they put such a mist before his eyes, that he could not see to choose good from evil, else he never would have chosen them for his companions; he never would have been led to spend night after night with them at the gambling club."

"At the gambling club, John!—where—what do you mean?" and poor Jane clasped her hands together, and looked at him with an expression of such wretchedness, that the old man turned his eyes from her to his wife and back again to Jane, as if he would, but durst not, inquire the reason of her emotion.

"I have done wrong," he stammered out, "old fool that I was. Erskine is your *friend*, Miss Jane. The Lord forgive me," he added, rising and walking to the door. Jane had risen also, and with a trembling hand was tying on her hat. "And the Lord help thee, child," he continued, turning again towards her, "and keep thee from every snare. Well, well!—I never should have thought it."

Jane felt humbled by the old man's sympathy; and yet it was too sincere, too kindly felt, to be repressed. She was hastening away, when Sarah said, "You have forgotten your bundle, miss."

"It is for you, my good friend," she replied; and, without awaiting their thanks, she bade them farewell, and was soon out of sight of the old man, whose eye followed her quick footsteps till she was hid by the adjoining wood. He then turned from the door, and raised his hands and his faded eyes, glistening with the gathering tears, to Heaven—"Oh Lord!" he exclaimed, "have mercy on thy young servant. Suffer not this child of light to be yoked to a child of darkness."

We believe that, in all classes and conditions, women are



more inclined than men to look on the bright side of marriage. In this case Sarah, after a little consideration, said, "I'm thinking, John, you take on too much ; you are borrowing trouble for Miss Jane. She is a wise, discreet young body, and she may cure Mr. Erskine of his faults. Besides, if he does go astray a little, that's no uncommon thing for a young man ; he is not wicked and hard-hearted like the Woodhulls."

"No, no, Sarah, he an't so bad as the Woodhulls, but he has been a spoilt child from the beginning : he is a comely man to look to, and he has a glib tongue in his head ; but he is all for self—all for self, Sarah. You might as well undertake to make the stiff branches of that old oak tender and pliable as the sprouts of the sapling that grows beside it, as to expect Miss Jane can alter Erskine. No—He alone can do it with whom all things are possible. We have no right to expect a miracle. She has no call to walk upon the sea, and we cannot hope a hand will be stretched out to keep her from sinking. It is the girl's beauty has caught him ; and when that is gone, and it is a quickly fading flower, she will have no hold whatever on him."

We know not how long the old man indulged in his reflections, for he was not again interrupted by Sarah, whose deference for her husband's superior sagacity seems to have been more habitual than even her namesake's of old.

Our unhappy heroine pursued her way home, her mind filled with 'thick coming' and bitter fancies, revolving over and over again the circumstances of John's narrative. He had thrown a new light on the character of her lover ; and she blamed herself, that faults had seemed so dim to her, which were now so glaring. She was not far from coming to the result, which, we trust, our readers have expected from the



integrity and purity of her character. "If I had remained ignorant of his faults," she thought, "I should have had some excuse: I might then have hoped for assistance and blessing in my attempts to reform him. It would be presumption to trust, now, in any efforts I could make; and what right have I, with my eyes open, to rush into a situation where my own weak virtues may be subdued by trials——must be assailed by temptation? Oh! when I heard him speak lightly of religion, how could I hope he would submit to its requisitions and restraints? I started at the first thought, that he was unprincipled; and yet I have always known there was no immovable basis for principle, but religion. Selfish—vain—how could I love him? And yet—and she looked at the other side of the picture—his preference of me was purely disinterested—an orphan—destitute—almost an outcast—liable to degradation—and he has exposed himself to all the obloquy I may suffer—and does he not deserve the devotion of my life?" A moment before, she would have answered her self-interrogation in the negative; but now she seemed losing herself in a labyrinth of opposing duties. She thought that she ought not to place implicit reliance in John's statements. He might have exaggerated Erskine's faults. In his situation, it was natural he should; but he had such a calm, sober way with him, every word bore the impress of truth. The story of the gambling club had turned the scale; but John might have been misinformed.

Thus, after all her deliberations, Jane re-entered her home without having come to any decision. Though we believe the opinion of a great moralist is against us, we doubt if "decision of character" belongs to the most scrupulously virtuous.



## CHAPTER XIII.

It is religion that doth make vows kept,  
But thou hast sworn against religion ;  
Therefore, thy latter vow against thy first  
Is in thyself rebellion to thyself :  
And better conquest never canst thou make  
Than arm thy constant and thy nobler parts  
Against these busy loose suggestions.

KING JOHN.

As Jane entered Mrs. Harvey's door, she met her kind hostess just returning from a walk, her face flushed with recent pleasure. "Where upon earth have you been?" she exclaimed. "Ah! if you had gone with me, you would not have come home with such a wo-begone face. Not a word! Well—nothing for nothing is my rule, my dear; and so you need not expect to hear where I have been, and what superb papers have come from New York, for the front rooms; and beautiful china, and chairs, and carpets, and a fine work-table, for an industrious little lady, that shall be nameless; all quite too grand for a sullen, silent, deaf and dumb school-mistress." She added, playfully, "If our cousin Elvira had been out in such a shower of gold, we should have been favoured with sweet smiles and sweet talk for one year at least. But there comes he that will make the bird sing, when it won't sing to



any one else : and so my dear, to escape chilling a lover's atmosphere, or being melted in it, I shall make my escape."

Jane would gladly have followed her, but she sat still, after hastily throwing aside her hat, and seizing the first book that she could lay her hands upon, to shelter her embarrassment. She sat with her back to the door.

Edward entered, and walking up to her, looked over her shoulder as if to see what book had so riveted her attention. It chanced to be Penn's "Fruits of Solitude." "Curse on all Quakers and quakerism !" said he, seizing the book rudely and throwing it across the room ; "wherever I go, I am crossed by them."

He walked about, perturbed and angry. Jane rose to leave him, for now, she thought, was not the time to come to an explanation ; but Erskine was not in a humour to be opposed in any thing. He placed his back against the door, and said, "No, Jane, you shall not leave me now. I have much to tell you. Forgive my violence. There is a point beyond which no rational creature can keep his temper. I have been urged to that point ; and, thank Heaven, I have not learnt that smooth-faced hypocrisy that can seem what it is not."

Jane trembled excessively. Erskine had touched the 'electric chain ;' she sunk into a chair, and burst into tears.

"I was right," he exclaimed ; "it is by your authority, and at your instigation, that I am dogged from place to place by that impertinent fellow ; you have entered into a *holy league* ; but know, Miss Elton, there is a tradition in our family, that no Erskine was ever ruled by his wife ; and the sooner the lady who is destined to be mine learns not to interfere in my affairs, the more agreeable it will be to me, and the more safe for herself."



Jane's indignation was roused by this strange attack ; and resuming her composure, she said, " If you mean that I shall understand you, you must explain yourself, for I am ignorant and innocent of any thing you may suspect me of."

" Thank heaven !" replied Erskine, " I believe you, Jane ; you know in the worst of times I have believed you ; and it was natural to be offended that you should distrust me. You shall know the ' head and front of my offending.' The sins that have stirred up such a missionary zeal in that Quaker saint, will weigh very light in the scales of love."

" Perhaps," said Jane gravely, " I hold a more impartial balance than you expect."

" Then you do not love me, Jane, for love is, and ought to be, blind ; but I am willing to make the trial ; I will never have it repeated to me, that ' if you knew all, you would withdraw your affections from me.' No one shall say that you have not loved me, with all my youthful follies on my head. I know you are a little puritanical ; but that is natural to one who has had so much to make her miserable ; the unhappy are driven to religion. But you are young and curable, if you can be rescued from this Quaker influence."

Edward still rattled on, and seemed a little to dread making the promised communication ; but at last, inferring from Jane's seriousness that she was anxious, and impatient himself to have it over, he went on to tell her—that from the beginning of their engagement, Mr. Lloyd had undertaken the *surveillance* of his morals ; that certainly he had been very civil to him, and possibly, if he had not been fortified by his antipathy to Quakers, he should have surrendered his confidence to him.

" No gentleman," he said, " no man of honourable feeling—no man of proper sensibility—would submit to the interfe-



rence of a stranger—a man not much older than himself—in matters that concerned himself alone ; it was an intolerable outrage. If Jane were capable of a fair judgment, she would allow that it was so.”

Jane mildly replied, that she could only judge from the facts ; as yet she had heard nothing but invectives. Erskine said, he had imagined he was stating his case in a court of love, and not of law ; but he had no objection, since his judge was as sternly just as an old Roman father, to state facts. He could pardon Mr. Lloyd his eagerness to make him adopt his plans of improvement in the natural and moral world : to the first he might have been led by his taste for agriculture, (which he believed was unaffected,) and to the second he was pledged by the laws of meddling quakerism. Still he said none but a Quaker would have thought of prying into the affairs of people who were strangers to him—however, that might be pardoned ; as he said before, he supposed every Quaker was bound to ‘bear his testimony,’ that he believed was their cant term for their impertinence. “But, my sweet judge, you do not look propitious,” Erskine continued after this misty preamble, from which Jane could gather nothing but that his prejudices and pride had thrown a dark shadow over all the virtues of Mr. Lloyd.

“I cannot, Erskine, look propitious on your sneers against the principles of my excellent friend.”

“Perhaps,” replied Erskine tartly, “his practise will be equally immaculate in your eyes. And now, Jane, I beseech you for once to forget that Mr. Lloyd is your *excellent friend*; a man who bestowed some trifling favours on your childhood, and remember the rights of one to whom you at least owe your love—though he would neither accept that, nor your gratitude, as a debt.”



Jane assured him she was ready to hear any thing and every thing impartially that he would tell her. He replied, that he detested stoical impartiality; that he wished her to enter into his loves and his hates, without asking a reason for them. "But since," he continued, "you must have the reason, I will not withhold it. As I told you, I submitted to a thousand vexations, little impertinences: he is plausible and gentlemanly in his manners, so there was nothing I could resent, till after a contemptible affair between John and the old basket-maker and the Woodhulls, in which I used my humble professional skill to extricate my friends, who had been perhaps a little hasty in revenging the impertinence of the foolish old man. Lloyd was present at the trial before the justice: I fancied, from the expression of his face, that he wished my friends to be foiled, and this stung me, and stimulated my faculties. I succeeded in winning my cause in spite of law and equity, for they were both against me; and this you know is rather flattering to one's talents. The Woodhull's overwhelmed me with praises and gratitude. I felt sorry for the silly old man, whom they had very unceremoniously unhoused, and I proposed a small subscription to enable him to pay the bill of costs, &c., which was his only receipt from the prosecution. I headed it, and it was soon made up; but the old fellow declined it with as much dignity as if he had been a king in disguise. It was an affair of no moment, and I should probably never have thought of it again, if Lloyd had not the next day made it the text upon which he preached as long a sermon as I would hear, upon the characters of the Woodhulls; he even went so far as to presume to remonstrate with me upon my connection with them; painted their conduct on various occasions in the blackest colours; spoke of their pulling down the old hovel, which



had in fact been a mere cumberer of the ground for twenty years, as an act of oppression and cruelty; said their habits were all bad; their pursuits all either foolish or dangerous. I restrained myself as long as possible, and then I told him, that I should not submit to hear any calumnies against my friends; friends who were devoted to me, who would go to perdition to serve me. If they had foibles, they were those that belonged to open, generous natures; they were open-handed, and open-hearted, and had not smothered their passions, till they were quite extinguished. I told him they were honourable young men, not governed by the fear that 'holds the wretch in order.' He might have known that I meant to tell him they were what he was not; but he seemed quite unmoved, and I spoke more plainly. I had never, I told him, been accustomed to submit my conduct to the revision of any one; that he had no right, and I knew not why he presumed, to assume it, to haunt me like an external conscience; that my 'genius was not rebuked by his,' neither would it be, if all the marvellous light of all his brethren was concentrated in his luminous mind."

"Oh, Erskine, Erskine!" exclaimed Jane, "was this your return for his friendly warning?"

"Hear me through, Jane, before you condemn me. He provoked me more than I have told you. He said that I was responsible to you for my virtue; that I betrayed your trust by exposing myself to be the companion, or the prey, of the vices of others. Would you have had me borne this, Jane? Would you thank me for allowing that he was more careful of your happiness than I am?"—"Well," added he, after a moment's pause, "as you do not reply, I presume you have not yet decided that point. We separated, my indignation roused to the highest pitch,



and he cold and calm as ever. When we next met, there was no difference in his manners to me that a stranger would have observed; but I perceived his words were all weighed and measured, as if he would not venture soon again to disturb a lion spirit."

"Is this all?" asked Jane.

"Not half," replied Erskine; and after a little hesitation he continued, "I perceive that it is impossible for you to see things in the light I do. Your aunt with her everlasting cant, your Methodist friend with her old maid notions, and this precise Quaker, above all, have made you so rigid, have so bound and stiffened every youthful indulgent feeling, that I have little hope of a favourable judgment."

"Then," said Jane, rising, "it is as unnecessary as painful for me to hear the rest."

"No, you shall not go," he replied; "I expect miracles from the touch of love. I think I have an advocate in your heart, that will plead for me against the whole 'privileged order' of professors—of every cast. Do not be shocked, my dear Jane; do not, for your own sake, make mountains of molehills, when I tell you, that the young men of the village instituted a club, three or four months since, who meet once a week socially, perhaps a little oftener, when we are all about home: and"—he hesitated a moment, as one will when he comes to a ditch, and is uncertain whether to spring over, to retreat, or to find some other way; but he had too much pride to conceal the fact, and though he feared a little to announce it, yet he was determined to justify it. Jane was still mute, and he went on—"We play cards; sometimes we have played later and higher perhaps than we should if we had all been in the leading-strings of prudence; all been bred Quakers. Our club are men of honour and spirit, high-mind-



ed gentlemen ; a few disputes, misunderstandings, might arise now and then, as they will among people who do not weigh every word, lest they should chance to have an idle one to account for ; but, till the last evening, we have, in the main, spent our time together as whole-souled fellows should, in mirth and jollity. As I said, last evening unfortunately——”

“ Tell me nothing more, Mr. Erskine ; I have heard enough,” interrupted Jane.

“ What ! you will not listen to friend Lloyd’s reproaches ; not listen to what most roused his holy indignation ?”

“ I have no wish to hear any thing further,” replied Jane.

“ I have heard enough to make my path plain before me. I loved you, Edward ; I confessed to you that I did.”

“ And you do not any longer ?”

“ I cannot ; the illusion has vanished. Neither do you love me.” Edward would have interrupted her ; but she begged him to hear her, with a dignified composure, that convinced him this was no sudden burst of resentment, no girlish pique that he might soothe with flattery and professions. “ A most generous impulse, Edward, led you to protect an oppressed orphan ; and I thought the devotion of my heart and my life were a small return to you. It is but a few months since. Is not love an engrossing passion ? But what sacrifices have you made to it ? Oh, Edward ! if in the youth and spring of your affection I have not had more power over you, what can I hope from the future ?”

“ Hope !—believe every thing, Jane. I will be as plastic as wax, in your hands. You shall mould me as you will.”

“ No, Edward ; I have tried my power over you, and found you wanting. Broken confidence cannot be restored.”

“ Jane, you are rash ; you are giving up independence—



protection. If you reject me, who will defend you from your aunt? Do you forget that you are still in her power?"

"No," replied Jane; "but I have the defence of innocence, and I do not fear her. It was not your protection, it was not independence I sought, it was a refuge in your affection;—that has failed me. Oh, Edward!" she continued, rising, "examine your heart as I have examined mine, and you will find the tie is dissolved that bound us; there can be no enduring love without sympathy; our feelings, our pursuits, our plans, our inclinations are all diverse."

"You are unkind, ungrateful, Jane."

"I must bear that reproach as I can; but I do not deserve it, Mr. Erskine."

Erskine imagined he perceived some relenting in the faltering of her voice, and he said, "Do not be implacable, Jane; you are too young, too beautiful, to treat the follies of youth as if they were incurable; give me a few months' probation, I will do any thing you require; abandon the club, give up my associates."

Jane paused for a moment, but there was no wavering in her resolution—"No, Mr. Erskine; we must part now; if I loved you, I could not resist the pleadings of my heart."

Erskine entreated—promised every thing; till convinced that Jane did not deceive him or herself, his vanity and pride, mortified and wounded, came to his relief, and changed his entreaties to sarcasms. He said the rigour that would immolate every human feeling, would fit her to be the Elect Lady of the Shaker society; he assured her that he would emulate her stoicism.

"I am no stoic," replied Jane; and the tears gushed from her eyes. "Oh, Erskine! I would make any exertions, any sacrifices to render you what I once thought you. I



would watch and toil to win you to virtue—to heaven. If I believed you loved me, I could still hope, for I know that affection is self-devoting, and may overcome all things. Edward,” she continued, with trembling voice, “there is one subject, and that nearest to my heart, on which I discovered soon after our engagement we were at utter variance. When I first heard you trifle with the obligations of religion, and express a distrust of its truths, I felt my heart chill. I reproached myself bitterly for having looked on your insensibility on this subject as the common carelessness of a gay young man, to be expected and forgiven, and easily cured. These few short months have taught me much; have taught me, Erskine, not that religion is the only sure foundation of virtue—that I knew before—but they have taught me, that religion alone can produce unity of spirit; alone can resist the cares, the disappointments, the tempests of life; that it is the only indissoluble bond—for when the silver chord is loosed, this bond becomes immortal. I have felt that my most sacred pleasures and hopes must be solitary.” Erskine made no reply; he felt the presence of a sanctified spirit. “You now know all, Erskine. The circumstances you have told me this evening, I partly knew before.”

“From Lloyd?” said Edward. “He then knew, as he insinuated, why your ‘colour had faded.’”

“You do him wrong. He has never mentioned your name since the morning I left my aunt’s. I heard them by accident, from John.”

“It is, in truth, time we should part, when you can give your ear to every idle rumour;” he snatched his hat, and was going.

Jane laid her hand on his arm, “Yes, it is time,” she said, “that we should part; but not in anger. Let us exchange



forgiveness, Edward." Erskine turned, and wept bitterly. For a few gracious moments his pride, his self-love, all melted away, and he felt the value, the surpassing excellence of the blessing he had forfeited. He pressed the hand Jane had given him to his lips, fervently; "Oh, Jane," he said, "you are an angel; forget my follies, and think of me with kindness."

"I shall remember nothing of the past," she said, with a look that had 'less of earth in it than heaven,' "but your goodness to me—God bless you, Edward; God bless you!" she repeated, and they separated—for ever!

For a few hours Erskine thought only of the irreparable loss of Jane's affections. Every pure, every virtuous feeling he possessed, joined in a clamorous tribute to her excellence, and in a sentence of self condemnation that could not be silenced. But Edward was habitually under the dominion of self-love, and every other emotion soon gave place to the dread of being looked upon as a rejected man. He had not courage to risk the laugh of his associates, or what would be much more trying, their affected pity; and to escape it all, he ordered his servant to pack his clothes, and make the necessary preparations for leaving the village in the morning, in the mail-stage for New-York. He was urged to this step too, by another motive, arising from a disagreeable affair in which he had been engaged—the affair which had induced Mr. Lloyd to make a second attempt to withdraw him from his vicious associates. At a recent meeting of the club, the younger Woodhull had introduced a gentleman who pretended to be a Mr. Rivington, from Virginia. Woodhull had met him at Saratoga Springs. They were kindred spirits, and, forming a sudden friendship, Rivington promised Woodhull that, after he had exhausted the pleasures of the Springs



he would come to —, and pass a few days with him before his return to Virginia. Rivington was a fit companion for his new friend; addicted to a score of vices; gambling high, and out-drinking, out-swearing, and out-bullying his comrades. Edward was certainly far better than any other member of this precious association. He was, from the first, disgusted with the stranger, with his gross manners, and not a little with the manifest indisposition to pay to him the deference he was accustomed to receive from the rest of the company. The club sat later than usual. Rivington's passions became inflamed by the liquor he had drank. A dispute arose about the play. Erskine and John Woodhull were partners. Rivington accused Woodhull of unfair play. Edward defended his partner. A violent altercation ensued between them. The lie was given and retorted in so direct a form as to afford ample ground for an honourable adjustment of the dispute.

“Rivington said, “If he had to deal with a Virginian—a man of honour—the quarrel might be settled in a gentlemanly way; but a sniveling cowardly Yankee had no honour to defend.” Edward was provoked to challenge him; and arrangements were made for the meeting at daylight in the morning, in a neighbouring wood, which had never been disturbed by harsher sound than a sportsman's gun. The brothers were to act as seconds.

The parties were all punctual to their appointment. The morning, of which they were going to make so unhallowed a use, was a most beautiful one. The mist took a poet's liberty and played with realities. The place of rendezvous was on a hill-side. Below it the valley appeared a lake over which floated a tremulous veil of vapor. Dotting it here and there were green spires of Lombardy poplar, branches of sugar



maple with its massive foliage, and widely spreading boughs of the drooping elm—that queen of beauty.

“Jocund day stood tip-toe on the summit of monument,” brightened the green hill-tops, and shone all along the wavy outline of the mountains. But this lovely aspect of nature was unheeded and unnoticed by these rash young men. Her sacred volume is a sealed book to those who are inflamed by passion, or degraded by vice.

The ground was marked out, the usual distance prescribed by the seconds, and the principals were just about to take their stations, when they were interrupted by Mr. Lloyd, who in returning from his morning walk, passed through this wood, which was within a short distance of his house. On emerging from the thick wood, into the open space selected by the young men, they were directly before him, so that it was impossible for him to mistake the design of their meeting.

“Confusion!” exclaimed Edward; mortified that Mr. Lloyd, of all men living, should have witnessed this scene; and then turning to him, “To what, sir,” said he haughtily, “do we owe the favour of your company?”

“Purely to accident, Mr. Erskine, or, I should say, to Providence, if I may be so happy as to prevent a rash violation of the laws of God and man.”

“Stand off, sir!” said Edward, determined now to brave Mr. Lloyd’s opposition, “and witness, if you will, for you shall not prevent, our brave encounter.”

Mr. Lloyd had interposed himself between Edward and his adversary, and he did not move from his station. “A brave encounter, truly!” he replied, pointing with a smile of contempt at Rivington, who was shaking as if he had an ague; “that young man’s pale cheeks and trembling limbs



do not promise the merit of bravery to your encounter, Mr. Erskine."

"The devil take the impertinent fellow!" exclaimed the elder Woodhull (Edward's second); "proceed to your business, gentlemen."

Erskine placed himself in an attitude to fire, and raised his arm. Mr. Lloyd remained firm and immovable. "Do you mean to take my fire, sir?" asked Erskine. "If you continue to stand there, the peril be upon yourself; the fault rests with you."

"I shall risk taking the fire, if thou dare risk giving it," replied Mr. Lloyd, coolly.

"Curse him!" said Woodhull, "he thinks you are afraid to fire."

This speech had the intended effect upon Erskine. "Give us the signal," he said, hastily.

The signal was given, and Edward discharged his pistol. The ball grazed Mr. Lloyd's arm, and passed off without any other injury. "It was bravely done," said he, with a contemptuous coolness, that increased, if any thing could increase the shame Erskine felt, the moment he had vented his passion by the rash and violent act. "We have been singularly fortunate," he continued, "considering thou hast all the firing to thyself, and two fair marks. Poor fellow!" he added, turning to Rivington, "so broad a shield as I furnished for thee, I should have hoped would have saved some of this fright."

John Woodhull had perceived that his friend's courage, which, the preceding evening, had been stimulated by the liquor, had vanished with the fog that clouded his reason; and ever since they came on the battle-ground, he had been vainly endeavouring to screw him up to the sticking point,



by suggesting, in low whispers, such motives as he thought might operate upon him; but all his efforts were ineffectual. Rivington was, to use a vulgar expression, literally 'scared out of his wits.' When the signal was given for firing, he had essayed to raise his arm, but it was all unstrung by fear, and he could not move it. The sound of Erskine's pistol completed his dismay; he dropped his pistol, said he was willing to own he was no gentleman; he would beg Mr. Erskine's pardon, and all the gentlemen's pardon; he would do any thing almost the gentlemen would say.

John Woodhull felt his own reputation implicated by his principal's cowardice; and passionate and reckless, he seized the pistol, and would have discharged the contents at Rivington; but Mr. Lloyd seeing his intention, caught hold of his arm, wrenched the pistol from him, fired it in the air, and threw it from him. "Shame on thee, young man!" he exclaimed, "does the spirit of murder so possess thee, that it matters not whether thy arm is raised against friend or foe?"

"He is no friend of mine," replied Woodhull, vainly endeavouring to extricate himself from Mr. Lloyd's manly grasp; he is a coward, and by my life and sacred honour!"—

"Oh, Mr. Woodhull! sir," interrupted Rivington, "I am your friend, sir, and all the gentlemen's friend, sir. I am much obliged to you, sir," turning to Mr. Lloyd, who could not help laughing at the eagerness of his cowardice; "I am sorry for the disturbance, gentlemen, and I wish you all a good morning, gentlemen!" and so saying, he walked off the ground as fast as his trembling limbs could take him.

Mr. Lloyd now released young Woodhull from his hold; and winding his handkerchief around his arm, which was slightly bleeding, he said, "I perceive there is no further occasion for my interposition. I think the experience of this



morning will not tempt you to repeat this singular disturbance of the peace of this community."

The party were all too thoroughly mortified to attempt a reply, and they separated. Erskine felt a most humiliating consciousness of his disgrace; but he had not sufficient magnanimity to confess it, nor even to express a regret that he had wounded a man, who exposed his life to prevent him from committing a crime. The Woodhulls were deprived of the pitiful pleasure of sneering at Mr. Lloyd's want of courage. The younger brother's arm still ached from his experience of Mr. Lloyd's physical strength; and they all felt the inferiority of their boastful, passionate, and reckless foolhardiness, to the collected, disinterested courage of a peaceful man, who had risked his life in their quarrel.

To fill up the measure of their mortification, Rivington had not left the village two hours, before several persons arrived there in pursuit of him. They informed his new friends, that he was not a Virginian, a name that passes among our northern bloods as synonymous with high-breeding, high-mindedness, noble daring, &c., &c., but that he was a countryman of their own, a celebrated swindler, who had lived by his wits, ascending by regular gradations through the professions of hostler, dancing-master, and itinerate actor; and that having lately, by cleverness in managing the arts of his vocation, possessed himself of a large sum of money, he had made his debüt as gentleman at the Springs.

After the events of the morning, Mr. Lloyd felt more anxiety than ever on Jane Elton's account; and never weary in well-doing, he determined to make one more effort to rescue Erskine from the pernicious society and influence of the Woodhulls. He solicited an interview with him; and without alluding to the events of the morning, he remonstrated



warmly and kindly against an intimacy, of which the degradation and the danger were too evident to need pointing out. He trusted himself to speak of Jane, of her innocence, her purity, her trustful affection, her solitariness, her dependence.

At any other time, we cannot think Edward would have been unmoved by the eloquence of his appeal; but now he was exasperated by the mortifications of the morning; and when Mr. Lloyd said, "Erskine, if Jane Elton knew all, would she not withdraw her affections from thee?" he replied, angrily, "She shall know all. I have a right to expect she will overlook a few foibles; such as belong to every young man of spirit. She owes me, at least, so much indulgence. She is bound to me by ties that cannot be broken—that she certainly cannot break." He burst away from Mr. Lloyd, and went precipitately to Mrs. Harvey's, where the explanation we have related ensued, and put a final termination to their unequal alliance.

The speculations of villagers are never at rest till they know the wherefore of the slightest movements of the prominent personages that figure on their theatre. Happily for our heroine, who was solicitous for a little while to be sheltered from the scrutiny and remarks of her neighbours, the affair of the duel soon became public, and sufficiently accounted for Erskine's abrupt departure.

Jane would have communicated to Mary, her kind, constant friend Mary Hull, the issue of her engagement; but it so happened, that she was at this time absent on a visit to her blind sister. She felt it to be just, that she should acquaint Mr. Lloyd with the result of an affair, in which he had manifested so benevolent and vigilant a care for her happiness. Perhaps she felt a natural wish, that he should know his confidence in her had not been misplaced. She could not



speak to him on the subject, for their intercourse had been suspended of late ; and besides, she was habitually reserved about speaking of herself. She sat down to address a note to him ; and, after writing a dozen, each of which offended her in some point—either betrayed a want of delicacy towards Erskine, or a sentiment of self-complacency—either expressed too much, or too little—she threw them all into the fire, and determined to leave the communication to accident.



## CHAPTER XIV.

Oh, wad some pow'r the giftie gie us,  
To see oursels as others see us !  
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,  
And foolish notion :  
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,  
And e'en devotion !

A FEW days after Erskine's departure, Mrs. Harvey entered Jane's room hastily,—“ Our village,” she exclaimed, “ is the most extraordinary place in the world ; wonders cease to be wonderful among us.”

“ What has happened now ?” inquired Jane, “ I know not from your face whether to expect good or evil.”

“ Oh evil, my dear, evil enough to grieve and frighten you. Your wretched cousin David Wilson has got himself into a scrape at last, from which all the arts of all his family cannot extricate him. You know,” she continued, “ that we saw an account in the New-York paper of last week, of a robbery committed on the mail-stage : the robbers have been detected and taken, and Wilson, who it seems had assumed a feigned name, is among them.”

“ And the punishment is death !” said Jane, in a tone of sorrow and alarm.



"Yes; so Mr. Lloyd says, by the laws of the United States, against which he has offended. Mr. Lloyd has been here, to request that you, dear Jane, will go to your aunt and say to her that he is ready to render her any services in his power. You know he is acquainted in Philadelphia, where David is imprisoned, and he may be of essential use to him."

"My poor aunt, and Elvira! what misery is this for them?" said Jane, instinctively transfusing her own feelings into their bosoms.

"For your aunt it may be," replied Mrs. Harvey, "for I think nothing can quite root out the mother; but as for Elvira, I believe she is too much absorbed in her own affairs to think of David's body or soul."

"I will go immediately to my aunt; but what has happened to Elvira?"

"Why Elvira, it seems, during her visit to the west, met with an itinerant French dancing-master, who became violently enamored of her, and who did not sigh or hope in vain. She probably knew his vocation would be an insuperable obstacle to her seeing him at home; and so between them they concerted a scheme to obviate that difficulty, by introducing him to Mrs. Wilson as a French physician, from Paris, who should volunteer his services to cure her scrofula, which, it is said, has lately become more troublesome than ever. By way of a decoy, he was to go upon the usual quack practice of "no cure no pay."

"And this," exclaimed Jane, "is the sick physician we heard was at my aunt's?"

"Yes, poor fellow, and sick enough he has been. He arrived just at twilight, last week on Monday, and having tied his horse, he was tempted, by seeing the door of the



chaise-house half open, to go in there to arrange his dress previous to making his appearance before Miss Wilson. He had hardly entered before old Jacob coming along, saw the door open, and giving the careless boys (whom he supposed in fault) a reversed blessing, he shut and fastened it. It was chilly weather, you know, but there the poor fellow was obliged to stay the live-long night, and till Jacob, sallying forth to do his morning chores, discovered him half-starved and half-frozen. But," said Mrs. Harvey, "you are prepared to go to your aunt, and I am detaining you—you may ask the sequel of Elvira."

"Oh no, let me hear the rest of it; only be short, dear Mrs. Harvey, for if any thing is to be done for that wretched young man, not a moment should be lost."

"My dear, I will be as short as possible; but my words will not all run out of my mouth at once, as they melted out of Munchausen's horn. Well, this poor French doctor, dancer, or whatever he is, effected an interview with Elvira, before he was seen by the mother; and though no doubt she was shocked by his unsentimental involuntary vigil, she overlooked it, and succeeded in palming him off on the old lady as a foreign physician, who had performed sundry marvellous cures in his western progress. Mrs. Wilson submitted her disease to his prescription. In the meanwhile, he, poor wretch, as if a judgment had come upon him for his sins, has been really and seriously sick, in consequence of the exposure to the dampness of a September night, in his nankins; and Elvira has been watching and nursing him according to the best and most approved precedents to be found in ballads and romances."

"Is it possible," asked Jane, "that aunt Wilson should be



imposed on for so long a time? Elvira is ingenious, and ready, but she is not a match for her quick-sighted mother."

"No, so it has proved in this case. The doctor became better, and the patient worse; his prescriptions have had a dreadful effect upon the scrofula; and as the pain increased, your aunt became irritable and suspicious. Last evening, she overheard a conversation between the hopeful lovers, which revealed the whole truth to her."

"And what has she done?"

"What could she do, my dear, but turn the good-for-nothing fellow out of doors, and exhaust her wrath upon Elvira. The dreadful news she received from David late last evening, must have driven even this provoking affair out of her troubled mind. But," said Mrs. Harvey, rising and going to the window, "who is that coming through our gate? Elvira, as I live!—what can she be after here?"

"My aunt has probably sent for me," replied Jane; and she hastened to open the door for her cousin, who entered evidently in a flutter. "I was just going to your mother's," said Jane.

"Stay a moment," said Elvira; "I must speak with you. Come into your room," and she hastened forward to Jane's apartment. She paused a moment on seeing Mrs. Harvey, and then begged she would allow her to speak with her cousin alone.

Mrs. Harvey left the apartment, and Elvira turned to Jane, and was beginning with great eagerness to say something, but she paused—unpinned her shawl, took it off, and then put it on again—and then asked Jane, if she had heard from Erskine; and, without waiting a reply, which did not seem to be very ready, she continued, "How glad I was he fought that duel; it was so spirited. I wish my lover would



fight a duel. It would have been delightful if he had only been wounded."

Jane stared at her cousin, as if she had been smitten with distraction. "Elvira," she said, with more displeasure than was often extorted from her, "you are an incurable trifler! How is it possible, that at this time you can waste a thought upon Erskine or his duel?"

"Oh! my spirits run away with me, dear Jane; but I do feel very miserable," she replied, affecting to wipe away the tears from her dry eyes. Poor David!—I am wretched about him. He has disgraced us all. I suppose you have heard, too, about Lavoisier. Every body has heard of mother's cruelty to him and to me. Oh, Jane! he is the sweetest creature—the most interesting being"——

"Elvira," replied Jane, coldly, "I do not like to reproach you in your present affliction; but you strangely forget all that is due to your sex, by keeping up such an intercourse with a stranger—by ranting in this way about a wandering dancing-master—a foreigner."

"A foreigner, indeed! as if that was against him. Why, my dear, foreigners are much more genteel than Americans; and besides, Lavoisier is a count in disguise. Oh! if you could only hear him speak French; it is as soft as an *Æolian* harp. Now, Jane, darling, don't be angry with me. I am sure there never was any body so persecuted and unfortunate as I am. Nobody feels for me."

"It is impossible, Elvira, to feel for those who have no feeling for themselves."

"Oh, Jane! you are very cruel," replied Elvira, whimpering; "I have been crying ever since I received poor David's letter, and it was about that I came here; but you do



not seem to have any compassion for our sorrows, and I am afraid to ask for what I came for."

"I cannot afford to waste any compassion on unnecessary or imaginary sorrows, Elvira. The real and most horrible calamity that has fallen upon you, requires all the exertions and feelings of your friends."

"That's spoken like yourself, dear, blessed Jane," said Elvira, brightening; "now I am sure you will not refuse me—you are always so generous and kind."

"I have small means to be generous," replied Jane; "but let me know, at once, what it is you want, for I am in haste to go to your mother."

"You are a darling, Jane—you always was."

"What is it you wish, Elvira?" inquired Jane again, aware that Elvira's endearments were always to be interpreted as a prelude to the asking of a favour.

"I wish, dear Jane," she replied, summoning all her resolution to her aid; "I wish you to lend me twenty dollars. If you had seen David's piteous letter to me, you could not refuse. It is enough to make any body's heart ache; he is down in a dark disagreeable dungeon, with nothing to eat from morning to night, but bread and water. He petitions for a little money so earnestly, it would make your heart bleed to read his letter. Mother declares she will not send him a dollar."

"How do you intend sending the money to him?" asked Jane, rising and going to her bureau.

"Oh!" replied Elvira, watching Jane's movements, "you are a dear soul. It is easy enough getting the money to him. I heard, this morning, that Mr. Harris is going on to the south; he starts this afternoon. I shall not mind walking to his house, though it is four miles from here. I shall



go immediately, and I shall charge him to deliver the money himself. It will be such a relief and comfort to my unfortunate brother."

There seemed to be something in Elvira's eagerness to serve her brother, and in her newly awakened tenderness for him, that excited Jane's suspicions; for she paused in the midst of counting the money, turned round, and fixed a penetrating look upon her cousin. Elvira, without appearing to notice any thing peculiar in her expression, said (advancing towards her), "Do be quick, dear Jane; it is a great way to Mr. Harris's; I am afraid I shall be late."

Jane had finished counting the money.

"Twenty dollars, is it, dear?" said Elvira, hastily and with a flutter of joy seizing it. "There are five dollars more," she continued, looking at a single bill Jane had laid aside; "let me have that too, dear, it will not be too much for David."

"I cannot," replied Jane; "that is all I have in the world, and that I owe to Mrs. Harvey."

"La, Jane! what matter is that; you can have as much money as you want of Erskine; and besides, you need not be afraid of losing it; I shall soon be of age, and then I shall pay you, for mother can't keep my portion from me one day after that. Then I will have a cottage. Lavoisier says, we can have no idea, in this country, how beautiful a cottage is, *à la Française*. Do, dearest, let me have the other five."

"No," said Jane, disgusted with Elvira's importunity and levity, and replacing the note in her drawer; "I have given you all I possess in the world, and you must be content with it."

Elvira saw that she should obtain no more. She hastily kissed Jane; and after saying, "Good-bye, my dear, go to



mother's, and stay till I come," she flew out of the house, exulting that her false pretences had won so much from her cousin. At a short distance from Mrs. Harvey's she joined her lover, according to a previous arrangement between them.

Lavoisier had procured a chaise from a neighbouring farmer, which was principally devoted to the transportation of its worthy proprietor and the partner of his joys to and from the meeting-house on Sundays and lecture days, but was occasionally hired out *to oblige* such persons as might stand in need of such an accommodation, and could afford to pay what was "consistent" for it.

"Allons—marche donc !" said the dancing philosopher to his horse, after seating Elvira ; and turning to her, he pressed one of her hands to his lips, saying, "Pardonnez-moi,"—adding as he dropt it, "tout nous sourit dans la nature."

Elvira pointed out the road leading to the dwelling of a justice of the peace, a few miles below the line which divides the State of Massachusetts from that of New-York. They arrived at this temple of Hymen, and of petty legislation about eleven in the morning. The justice was at work on his farm ; a mēssenger was dispatched for him, with whom he returned in about thirty minutes, which seemed as many hours to our anxious lovers.

"Dey say," said Lavoisier, "l'amour fait passer le temps, but in l'Amerique it is very differente."

The justice took Lavoisier aside, and inquired whether there were any objections to the marriage, on the part of the lady's friends.

"Objection !" said Lavoisier, "it is the most grand félicité to every body. You cannot conceive."

On being further interrogated, Lavoisier confessed that



they came from Massachusetts; and being asked why they were not married at the place of the lady's residence, he said that "some personnes without sensibilité may wait, but for mademoiselle and me, it is impossible."

Elvira being examined apart, in like manner, declared that her intended husband's impatience and her own dislike to the formality of a publishment, had led them to avoid the usual mode and forms of marriage.

The justice, who derived the chief profits of his office from clandestine matches, and who had made these inquiries more because it was a common custom, than from any scruples of conscience, or sense of official duty, was perfectly satisfied; and after requiring from the bridegroom the usual promise to love and cherish; and from the bride, to love, cherish, and obey; pronounced them man and wife, and recorded the marriage in a book containing a record of similar official acts, and of divers suits and the proceedings therein.

The bride and bridegroom immediately set out for the North River, intending to embark there for New-York.

"These things do manage themselves better in France," said Lavoisier. "Les nûces qui se font ici—the marriages you make here—are as solemn que la sepulture—as to bury. Le Cupidon ici a l'air bien sauvage; if de little god was paint here, they would make him work as de justice. Eh bien!" said he, after a pause, "chacun a son métier; without some fermiers there should not be some maîtres-de-danse, some professeurs of de elegant arts: et sans les justices, you would not be mon ange—you would not be Madame Lavoisier."

Elvira was so occupied with the change in her condition, and the prospect before her, that she did not observe the direction in which they were travelling; and by mistake they



took the road leading back through a cleft in the mountain towards a village in the vicinity of the one they had left.

As they ascended the top of a hill, their steed began to prick his ears at the distant sound of a drum and fife, which the fugitives soon perceived to be part of the pride, pomp, and circumstance of a militia training. The village tavern was in full view, and within a short distance, and the company was performing some marching evolution a little beyond. An election of captain had just taken place; and the suffrages of the citizen soldiers had fallen upon a popular favourite, who had taken his station as commanding officer, and was showing his familiarity with the marches and counter-marches of Eaton's Manual. He had been just promoted from the rank of first lieutenant; and previous to the dismissal of his men, which was about to take place, he drew them up in front of the village store, when according to custom, and with due regard to economy, which made the store a more eligible place for his purposes than the tavern, he testified his gratitude for the honour which had been done him by copious libations of cherry rum, and of St. Croix, which was diluted or not, according to the taste of each individual. The men soon began to grow merry; and some of them swore that they would not scruple to vote for the captain for major-general, if they had the choosing of that officer. The venders of gingerbread felt the influence of the good fellowship and generosity which the captain had set in motion. A market for a considerable portion of their commodity was soon furnished by the stimulated appetites of the men, and a portion was distributed by the more gallant among them, to some spectators of the softer sex, who were collected upon the occasion.

The happy pair in the mean time had arrived at the tavern. Elvira's attention had not been sufficiently awakened



by any thing but the conversation of her husband, to notice where she was, until she was called to a sense of her embarrassing situation by the landlord's sign, as it was gently swinging in the wind between two high posts, and exhibited a successful specimen of village sign-painting, the distinguished name of the host, and the age of his establishment.

Elvira directed the Frenchman to stop and turn his horse, which he did immediately, without understanding the object.

"Eh bien !" said he, his eyes still fixed on the young soldiers; "Il me vient une idée. I shall tell you." He went on to signify that he would immediately offer to teach the art of fencing and of using the broad-sword; that he would instruct them "*dans l'art militaire, à la mode de Napoleon;*" and that, after giving a few lessons, he would make a tournament, in which he would let them see, among other things, how Bonaparte conquered the world; how the cavalry could trample down flying infantry; and how the infantry, in such circumstances, could defend themselves; and that he would, in this way, make himself "*bien riche.*"

During all this time Elvira was collecting her wits to know what the emergency required; and as soon as Lavoisier's volley ceased, she begged him to return again, thinking she might best avoid observation by seeking shelter in the tavern till dark.

They immediately alighted, and Lavoisier, after showing his bride to her apartment, descended to give some orders about his horse; when, to his astonishment, he was accosted by the jolly landlord, whose name was Thomas, "Ha, mounsheer! I guess you are the man who staid with me a fortnight two years ago, when I kept house in York State, and borrowed my chaise to go a jaunting, and told me to take care



of your trunk, that had nothing but a big stone in it, till you came back. I got my horse and chaise again," continued he, seizing the astounded professor of the dancing and military arts by the collar, "and now I'll take my reck'nin' out of your skin, if I can't get it any other way."

At this moment the new captain and a considerable number of his merry men entered the house. After they had learned the circumstances of the case, from what passed between monsieur and the landlord, one of them cried out, "Ride him on a rail—let him take his steps in the air!"

"He ought to dance on nothing, with a rope round his neck," said Thomas.

"No, no," said a third, "he has taken steps enough; that flashy jacket had better be swapped for one of tar and feathers."

"Messieurs, messieurs," said Lavoisier, "je suis bien malheureux. I am very sorry. Il etoit mon malheur—it was my misère to not pay monsieur Thomas, and it was his malheur not to be paid. I shall show you my honneur, when I shall get de l'argent. Il faut se soumettre aux circonstances. De honesty of every body depend upon what dey can do. I am sure, every body is gentleman in dis country. C'est un beau pays."

By this time one of the corporals had set a skillet of tar on the fire, and another, by the direction of the lieutenant, who seemed to take upon himself the command of the party, had brought a pillow from a bed in an adjoining room. The pillow was very expeditiously uncased, and a sufficient rent made in the ticking. The astonished Français stood aghast, as his bewildered mind caught a faint notion of the purpose of these preparations. He changed his tones of supplication to those of anger. "Vous êtes des sauvages!" he exclaimed



"You are monstres, diables! You do not merit to have some gentiman to teach la belle danse in dis country."

"He'll cackle like a blue-jay," said the corporal, "by the time we get the feathers on him."

"They are hen's feathers," said the lieutenant, "but they'll do. Now ensign Sacket get on to the table, and corporal you hand him the skillet of tar. You Mr. Le Vosher, or whatever your name is, stand alongside of the table."

Monsieur believed his destiny to be fixed—"Oh, mon Dieu!" he exclaimed; "le diable! qu'est que c'est que ça? Vat you do—vat is dat?"

"Tar, tar, nothing but tar—stand up to the table," was the reply.

"Sacristie! put dat sur ma tête—on my head et sur mes habits—my clothes; mes beaux habits de nocés—my fine clothes for de marriage! Oh, messieurs, de grace, pardonnez-moi; vous gaterez—you will spoil all my clothes."

"Blast your clothes!" said the corporal; "pull them off."

"Je vous remercie, tank you, gentlemen;" and he very deliberately divested himself of a superfine light-blue broad-cloth coat, and embroidered silk vest, a laced cravat and an under cravat of coarser fabric. He prolonged the operation as much as possible, making continued efforts to conciliate the compassion of his persecutors, which only added to their merriment.

At last all pretences for delay were over; every voice was hushed. The ensign began to uplift the fatal skillet, when all composure of mind forsook the affrighted bridegroom, and he uttered a loud shriek. Favoured by the general stillness, Elvira distinctly heard his voice, and knew at once that it betokened the extremity of distress. She rushed to the rescue, screaming for mercy. The men fell back, leaving their



trembling victim in the centre of the room. "Ah! ma chère, quels bêtes!" he exclaimed, with a grimace that produced a peal of laughter. One of the men threw him his coat, another his vest; while the corporal set down the skillet, saying, "If it had not been for his *gal*, I'd have given him a wedding suit."

But we rather think monsieur would have been released without the interposition of his distressed bride, for a Yankey mob is proverbially good-natured, and the merry men had enlisted in the landlord's cause, for the sake of a joke, rather than with the intention of inflicting pain. After the ludicrous adventure was over—ludicrous to the jolly *trainers*, but sad enough to the fugitive pair—Elvira deemed it expedient to press their retreat. Monsieur brought the chaise to the door, and they drove away amidst the loud huzzas and merry clappings of the jovial company.



## CHAPTER XV.

————— Even-handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd  
Chalice, to our own lips.

MACBETH.

DAVID WILSON, not long after the affair of the robbery of his mother's desk, went to New-York, in order to see his comrades, who were imprisoned there, and, if possible, to abate their demands on his purse. He succeeded in doing this; but having fallen in (attracted doubtless by natural affinities) with other companions as wicked, and more desperate, he soon spent in that city, which affords remarkable facilities for ridding men of their money, all that remained of the five hundred dollars. He preyed on others for a little time, as he had been their prey; and, finally reduced to extreme want, he joined two of his new associates in an attempt on the southern mail, which ended in his detection and commitment to jail in Philadelphia, where he was now awaiting a capital trial. A particular account of the whole affair, accompanied with letters from her son, was transmitted to Mrs. Wilson, who seemed now to be visited on every side with the natural and terrible retribution of her maternal sins.

After Elvira's departure, with all the profits of her little



school, Jane did not delay another moment to go to her aunt's, in order to communicate to her Mr. Lloyd's kind offer of assistance, and to extend to her any aid or consolation in her own power.

She found Mrs. Wilson alone, but not in a frame of mind that indicated any just feelings. She received her niece coldly. After a silence of a few moments, which Jane wished but knew not how to break, she inquired of Mrs. Wilson, whether she had any more information respecting David than was public?

Her aunt replied, she had not. She understood the particulars were all in the paper, even to his name; she thought that might have been omitted; but people always seemed to delight in publishing every one's misfortunes.

Jane asked if the letters expressed any doubt that David would be convicted?

"None," Mrs. Wilson said. "To be sure," she added, "I have a letter from David, in which he begs me to employ counsel for him: so I suppose he thinks it possible that he might be cleared: but a drowning man catches at straws."

"Do you know," inquired Jane, "the names of the eminent lawyers in Philadelphia? Mr. Lloyd will be best able to inform you whom to select among them. I will go to him immediately."

"No, no, child; I have made up my mind upon that subject. It would be a great expense. There is no conscience in city lawyers; they would devour all my substance, and do me no good after all. No, no—I shall leave David entirely in the hands of Providence."

"And can you, aunt," said Jane, "acquiesce in your son's being cut off in the spring of life, without an effort to save



him—without an effort to procure him a space for repentance and reformation?”

“Do not presume, Jane Elton,” replied Mrs. Wilson, “to instruct me in my duties. A space for repentance! A day—an hour—a moment is as good as an eternity for the operations of the Spirit. Many, at the foot of the gallows, have repented, and have died exulting in their pardon and new-born hope.”

“Yes,” replied Jane; “and there have been many who have thus repented and rejoiced, and then been reprieved; and have they then shown the only unquestionable proof of genuine penitence—a renewed spirit? Have they kept the commandments, for by this shall ye know that they are the disciples of Christ? No: they have returned to their old sins, and been tenfold worse than at first.”

“I tell you,” said Mrs. Wilson, impatiently, “you are ignorant, child; you are still in the bond of iniquity; you cannot spiritually discern. There is more hope, and that is the opinion of some of our greatest divines, of an open outrageous transgressor, than of one of a moral life.”

“Then,” replied Jane, “there is more hope of a harvest from a hard-bound, neglected field, than from that which the owner has carefully ploughed and sowed, and prepared for the sun and the rains of heaven.”

“The kingdom of grace is very different from the kingdom of nature,” answered Mrs. Wilson. “The natural man can do nothing towards his own salvation. Every act he performs, and every prayer he offers, but provokes more and more the wrath of the Almighty.”

Jane made no reply; but she raised her hands and eyes as if she deprecated so impious a doctrine, and Mrs. Wilson went on: “Do not think my children are worse than others;



you, Jane, are as much a child of wrath, and so is every son and daughter of Adam, as he is—all totally depraved—totally corrupt. You may have been under more restraint, and not acted out your sins; but no thanks to you;” and she continued, fixing her large gray eyes steadfastly on Jane. “there are beside my son who would not *seem* better, if they had not friends to keep their secrets for them.” Mrs. Wilson had, for very good reasons, never before alluded to the robbery of her desk, since the morning it was committed; but she was now provoked to foul means to support her argument, tottering under the assault of facts.

Jane did not condescend to notice the insinuation; she felt too sincere a pity for the miserable self-deluded woman; but, still anxious that some effort should be made for David, she said to Mrs. Wilson, “Is there, then, nothing to be done for your unhappy son?”

“Nothing, child, nothing; he has gone out from me, and he is not of me; his blood be upon his own head; I am clear of it; my ‘foot standeth on an even place.’ My case is not an uncommon one,” she continued, as if she would by this vain babbling, silence the voice within. “The saints of old—David, and Samuel, and Eli, were afflicted as I am, with rebellious children. I have planted and I have watered, and if it is the Lord’s will to withhold the increase, I must submit.”

“Oh, aunt!” exclaimed Jane, interrupting and advancing towards her, “do not—do not, for your soul’s sake, indulge any longer this horrible delusion. You have more children,” she continued, falling on her knees, and taking one of her aunt’s hands in both hers, and looking like a rebuking messenger from Heaven, “be pitiful to them; be merciful to



your own soul. You deceive yourself. You may deceive others; but God is not mocked."

Mrs. Wilson was conscience stricken. She sat as motionless as a statue; and Jane went on with the courage of an Apostle to depicture, in their true colours, her character and conduct. She made her realize, for a few moments at least, the peril of her soul. She made her feel, that her sound faith, her prayers, her pretences, her meeting-goings, were nothing—far worse than nothing in the sight of Him, who cannot be deceived by the daring hypocrisies, the self-delusions, the refuges of lies, of his creatures. She described the spiritual disciple of Jesus; and then presented to Mrs. Wilson so true an image of her selfishness, her pride, her domestic tyranny, and her love of money, that she could not but see that it was her very self. There was that in Jane's looks, and voice, and words, that was not to be resisted by the wretched woman; and like the guilty king, when he saw the record on the wall, her "countenance was changed, her thoughts were troubled, and her knees smote one against the other."

At this moment they were interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Lloyd. Jane rose, embarrassed for her aunt and herself, and walked to the window. Mrs. Wilson attempted to speak, to rise; she could do neither, and she sunk back on her chair, convulsed with misery and passion. Mr. Lloyd mistook her agitation for the natural wailings of a mother and with instinctive benevolence he advanced to her, and said, "Be composed, I pray; I have intelligence that will comfort thee."

"What is it?" inquired Jane, eager to allay the storm she had raised.

Mrs. Wilson was unable to speak.



"Thy son has escaped, Mrs. Wilson, and is, before this, beyond the reach of his country's laws. Here is a letter addressed to thee, which came inclosed in one to me." Mr. Lloyd laid the letter on Mrs. Wilson's lap, but she was unable to open it or even to hold it. Her eyes were fixed, her hands firmly closed, and she continued to shiver with uncontrollable emotion. "She is quite unconscious," he said, "she does not hear a word I say to her."

Jane flew to her assistance, spoke to her, entreated her to answer, bathed her temples and her hands—but all without effect. "Oh!" she exclaimed, terrified and dismayed, "I have killed her."

"Do not be so alarmed," said Mr. Lloyd, "there is no occasion for it; the violence of her emotion has overcome her, it is the voice of nature; let us convey her to her bed."

Jane called assistance, and they removed her to her own room, and placed her on her bed.

"See," whispered Mr. Lloyd to Jane, after a few moments, "she is becoming composed already; leave her for a little time with this domestic—I have much to say to thee."

Jane followed him to the parlour. He took both her hands, and said, his face radiant with joy, "Jane, many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Nay, do not tremble, unless it be for the sin of having kept from me so long the blessed intelligence of this morning."

Poor Jane tried to stammer out an apology for her reserve, but Mr. Lloyd interrupted her by saying playfully, "I understand it all; I am too old, too stern, too—Quakerish, to be a young lady's confidant."

"Oh, say not so," exclaimed Jane, gathering courage from his kindness; "you have been my benefactor, my guardian,



my kindest friend; forgive my silence—I feel it all—I have always felt it; perhaps most, when I seemed most insensible.” Mr. Lloyd looked gratified beyond expression; it cost him an effort to interrupt her. But he said, “Nay, my sweet friend, it will be my turn next, if thou dost not stop, and I too shall be, as the French name my brethren, a *Trembleur*. I have a great deal to tell thee; our joys have clustered. What sayest thou, Jane, to another walk to old John’s, with as strange, and a more welcome guide, than crazy Bet. I have no time to lose in enigmas: our dispatches were brought by a sailor, a fine good-natured, hardy-looking fellow, who came to my house this morning. I was wondering what he could be doing so far from his element, when Mary, who returned to us yesterday, opened the door for him, and exclaimed, with a ludicrous mixture of terror and joy, ‘The Lord have mercy on us! is it you, or your ghost, Jemmy?’ The sailor gave her a truly professional, and most unghostly, smack, and replied between crying and laughing, ‘I am no ghost, Mary, as you may see; but excuse me, Mary, (for Mary had stepped back, a little embarrassed by the involuntary freedom of her friend,) I was so glad, I could not help it. No, no, Mary, I am no ghost, but a prodigal that’s come back, thanks to the Lord! a little better than I went.’ James, who is indeed the long lost son of our good friend John of the Mountain, went on to detail his experiences to Mary, who by turns raised her hands and eyes in wonder and devout thankfulness. The amount of it is, for their joy overflowed all barriers of reserve, he left this place ten years ago in despair, because Mary would not marry him, and sailed to the Mediterranean; the poor fellow was taken by the Algerines, and after suffering almost incredibly for six years, he was so happy as to procure his freedom along with some English captives. After his release,



he said he could not endure the thought of coming to his father and mother quite destitute; for, as he said to Mary, though he was a wild lad, and had a fancy to follow the sea, her cruelty would not have driven him to leave them, if he had not hoped to get something to comfort their old age with. He wrote them an account of his sufferings, and of an engagement he had made to go to Calcutta in the service of an English merchantman. The letters it seems never reached them. He went to India; many circumstances occurred to advance him in the favour of his employer; his integrity, which, he said, the tears streaming from his eyes, was 'all owing to the teachings and examples of his good old parents;' and his intelligence, 'thanks to his country, which took care to give the poor man learning,' occasioned his being employed in the Company's service, and sent with some others into the interior of India on business of great hazard and importance, the success of which his employers attributed to him, and rewarded him most liberally. All these facts came out inevitably in the course of his narrative, for he spoke not boastfully, but with simplicity and gratitude. He has returned with enough to purchase a farm, and give to his parents all that they want of this world; and, what our friend Mary thinks best of all, he has come home a Methodist, having been made one by a missionary of that zealous sect in India. If I have not misinterpreted Mary's glistening eye, this fact will cost me my housekeeper."

"Dear, dear Mary!" exclaimed Jane, brushing away the tears of sympathy and joy that Mr. Lloyd's narrative had brought to her eyes, "and John, and old Sarah. Oh, it is as beautiful a conclusion of their lives, as if it had been conjured up by a poet."

"Ah, Jane," replied Mr. Lloyd, "there are realities in the



kind dispositions of Providence more blessed than a poet can dream of; and there are virtues in real life," he continued, smiling, "that might lend a persuasive grace to the page of a moralist; it is of those I must now speak."

"Not now," said Jane, hastily rising, "I must go to my aunt."

"At least then, take these letters with thee; the levity of one will give thee some pain; in the other, the wretched Wilson has done thee late justice. Now go, my blessed friend, to thy aunt; would that thou couldst minister to her mind, distracted by these terrible events. Oh, that power might be given to thy voice to awaken her conscience from its deep, oblivious sleep!"

It was a remarkable proof of Mr. Lloyd's habitual grace, that he did not forget, at this moment, that Jane could not work miracles without supernatural assistance.

There is not a happier moment of existence than that which a benevolent being enjoys, when he knows that the object of his solicitude and love has passed safely through trial, is victorious over temptation, and has overcome the world. This was the joy that now a thousand fold requited Mr. Lloyd for all his sufferings in the cause of our heroine. Would Mr. Lloyd have been equally happy in the proved virtue of his favourite, if hope had not brightened his dim future with her sweetest visions? Certainly not. He who hath wonderfully made us, hath, in wisdom, implanted the principle of self-love in our bosoms; and let the enthusiast rave as he will, it is neither the work of grace nor of discipline to eradicate it; but it may, and if we would be good, it must be modified, controlled, and made subservient to the benefit and happiness of others.

Mr. Lloyd had no very definite plans for the future; but



his horizon was brightening with a coming day; and without vanity or presumption, he trusted all would be well.

Jane returned to her aunt's apartment, and found her in a sullen stupor. She did not seem to notice; at any rate, she made no reply to Jane's kind inquiries, and she, after drawing the curtains and dismissing the attendant, sat down to the perusal of the letters Mr. Lloyd had given to her. The first she read was from Erskine to Mr. Lloyd, and as it was not long, and was rather characteristic, we shall take the liberty to transcribe it for the benefit of our readers.

"DEAR SIR,

"In returning to my lodgings, late last evening, I was accosted by a man, muffled in a cloak. I recognised his voice at once. It was our unfortunate townsman, Wilson. He has succeeded *à merveille* in an ingenious plan of escape from du-rance, and sails in the morning for one of the West India islands, where he will, no doubt, make his débüt as pirate, or in some other character, for which his training has equally qualified him. A precious rascal he is indeed; but, allow me a phrase of your fraternity, sir, I had no *light* to give him up to justice, after he had trusted to me; and more than that, for he informs me, that he had, since his confinement, written to the Woodhulls to engage me as counsel, and through them he learnt the fact of my being in this city. This bound me, in some sort, to look upon the poor devil as my client; and, as it would have been my duty to get him out of the clutches of the law, it would have been most ungracious to have put him into them, you know, since his own cleverness, instead of mine, has extricated him. He has explained to me, and he informs me has communicated to you, (for he says he cannot trust his mother to make them public,) the particulars of the



sequestration of the old woman's money. I think Miss Elton never imparted to you the event that led to the sudden engagement, from which she has chosen to absolve me; and you have yet to learn, that there is generosity, disinterestedness in the world, that may rival the virtue which reposes under the shadow of the broad-brim. But, your pardon. I have wiped out all scores. The reception I have met with in this finest of cities, has been such as to make me look upon the incidents of an obscure village as mere bagatelles, not worthy of a sigh from one who can bask in the broad sunshine of ladies' favour and fortune's gifts. One word more, *en passant*, of Wilson's explanations. I rejoice in it sincerely, on Miss Elton's account. She deserved to have suffered a little for her childishness in holding herself bound by an exacted promise, for having put herself in a situation in which her guilt would have seemed apparent to any one but a poor dog whom love had hoodwinked—pro tempore. She is too young and too beautiful a victim for the altar of conscience. However, I forgive her, her scruples, her fanaticism, and her cruelties; and wish her all happiness in this world and the next, advising her not to turn anchorite here, for the sake of advancement there.

“I know not when I shall return to the village life: stale, flat, and unprofitable. This gay metropolis has cured me of my rural tastes; and, as I flatter myself, fashion's hand has quite effaced my rusticity.

“By a lucky chance I met the son of your protégé, John, yesterday. The poor dog's ‘hairbreadth ‘scapes’ will make the villagers stare, all unused as they are to the marvellous. I told him, by way of a welcome to his country, I should pay his expenses home. This I hope you, sir, will accept in expiation of all my sins against the old basket-maker.



“With many wishes that you may find a new and more pliant subject for your Mentor genius, I remain, sir, your most obedient,

“Humble servant,

“E. ERSKINE.

“N. B. My regards to Miss Elton. Tell her I look at the windows of our print shops every day, in the expectation of seeing, among their gay show, her lovely figure chosen by one of the sons of Apollo, to personate the stern lady, Justice, (whom few seek and none love) poising her scales in solitary dignity.”

“And is this the man,” thought Jane, as she folded the letter, “that I have loved—that I fancied loved me?”—and her heart rose in devout thankfulness for the escape she had made from an utter wreck of her happiness.

She next read Wilson’s letter to Mr. Lloyd. It began with the particulars of his late escape, which seemed to possess his mind more than any thing else. He then said, that being about to enter on a new voyage, he wished to lighten his soul of as much of its present cargo as possible. He stated, and we believe with sincerity, that he had intended, if it ever became necessary, to assert Jane’s innocence; but that, as long as no one believed her guilty, he had thought it fair to slip his neck out of the yoke; and now, that every body might know how good she was, he wished Mr. Lloyd to make known all the particulars of the transaction. He then went on to detail as much as he knew of her visit to the mountain, which had led to her subsequent involvement. He expressed no remorse for the past, no hope of the future. His wish to exculpate Jane had arisen from a deep feeling of her excellence,



had suffered all her life, and which had probably increased the natural asperity of her temper ; as all evils, physical as well as moral, certainly make us worse, if they do not make us better. Elvira was summoned to her death-bed ; but she arrived too late to receive either the reproaches or forgiveness of her mother. Jane faithfully attended her through her last illness, and most kindly ministered to the diseases of her body. Her mind no human comfort could reach ; no earthly skill touch its secret springs. The disease was attended with delirium ; and she had no rational communication with any one from the beginning of her illness. This Jane afterwards sincerely deplored to Mr. Lloyd, who replied, " I would not sit like the Egyptians in judgment on the dead. Thy aunt has gone with her record to Him who alone knows the secrets of the heart, and therefore is alone qualified to judge His creatures ; but for our own benefit, Jane, and for the sake of those whose probation is not past, let us ever remember the wise saying of William Penn, ' a man cannot be the better for that religion for which his neighbour is the worse.' I have no doubt thy aunt has suffered some natural compunctions for her gross failure in the performance of her duties ; but she felt safe in a sound faith. It is reported, that one of the Popes said of himself, that ' as Eneas Sylvius, he was a damnable heretic, but as Pius II. an orthodox Pope.' "

" Then you believe," replied Jane, " that my unhappy aunt deceived herself by her clamorous profession ? "

" Undoubtedly. Ought we to wonder that she effected that imposition on herself, by the aid of self-love, (of all love the most blinding,) since we have heard, in her funeral sermon, her religious experiences detailed as the triumphs of a saint ; her strict attention on religious ordinances commended, as if they were the end and not the means of a religious life ; since



we (who cannot remember a single gracious act of humility in her whole life) have been told, as a proof of her gracious state, that the last rational words she pronounced were, that she 'was of sinners the chief?' There seems to be a curious spiritual alchymy in the utterance of these words; for we cannot say, that those who use them mean to 'palter in a double sense,' but they are too often spoken and received as the evidence of a hopeful state. Professions and declarations have crept in among the Protestants, to take the place of the mortifications and penances of the ancient church; so prone are men to find some easier way to heaven than the toilsome path of obedience."



and seemed to be the last ray of just or kindly feeling that his dark, guilty spirit emitted.

Jane had scarcely finished reading the letters, when her attention was called to her aunt, who had been thrown into a state of agitation almost amounting to frenzy, by the perusal of her son's farewell letter to herself, which Mr. Lloyd had placed on the pillow beside her, believing that it merely contained such account of David's escape and plans, as would have a tendency to allay the anguish of her mind, which he still supposed arose solely from her apprehensions for her son's life. But Mr. Lloyd was too good even to conceive of the bitterness of a malignant, exasperated spirit, wrought to madness, as Wilson's was, by his mother's absolute refusal to make any effort to save his life.

The letter was filled with execrations. "If I have a soul," he said, "eternity will be spent in cursing her who has ruined it;" but he did not fear the future—hell was a bug-dear to frighten children. "You," he continued, "neither fear it, nor believe it; for if you did, your religion would be something besides a cloak to hide your hard, cruel heart. Religion! what is it but a dream, a pretence? I might have believed it, if I had seen more like Jane Elton—whom you have trodden on, wrongfully accused, when *you knew* her innocent. Mother, mother! oh, that I must call you so!—as I do it, I howl a curse with every breath—you have destroyed me. You it was that taught me, when I scarcely knew my right hand from my left, that there was no difference between doing right and doing wrong, in the sight of the God you worship; you taught me, that I could do nothing acceptable to him. If you taught me truly, I have only acted out the nature totally depraved, (your own words,) that he gave to me, and I am not to blame for it. I could do nothing to



save my own soul ; and according to your own doctrine, I stand now a better chance than my moral cousin, Jane. If you have taught me falsely, I was not to blame ; the peril be on your own soul. My mind was a blank, and you put your own impressions on it ; God (if there be a God) reward you according to your deeds !”

This horrible letter, of which we have given a brief specimen ; and subtracted from that the curses that pointed every sentence, seemed for a little while to swell the clamours of Mrs. Wilson’s newly awakened conscience. But, alas ! the impression was transient ; the chains of systematic delusion were too firmly riveted—the habits of self-deception too strong, to be overcome.

Jane, fearful that the violence of her aunt’s passion would destroy her reason, sought only, for the remainder of the day and the following night, to soothe and quiet her. She remained by her bedside, and silently watched, and prayed. Mrs. Wilson’s sleep was disturbed, but she awoke somewhat refreshed, and quite composed. Her first action was to tear David’s letter into a thousand fragments. She was never known afterwards to allude to its contents, nor to her conversation with Jane. There was a restlessness through the remainder of her life, which betrayed the secret gnawings of conscience. Still it is believed, she quelled her convictions as Cromwell is reported to have done, when, as his historian says, he asked Goodwin, one of his preachers, if the doctrine were true, that the elect should never fall, nor suffer a final reprobation ?—“ Nothing more certain,” replied the preacher. “ Then I am safe,” said the Protector ; “ for I am sure I was once in a state of grace.”

Mrs. Wilson survived these events but a few years. She was finally carried off by scrofula, a disease from which she



and which was now made in spite of Rebecca's presence. It cannot be denied, in deference to the opinion of some very fastidious ladies, that Jane was prepared for it; for though the marks of love are not quite as obvious, as the lively Rosalind describes them, yet we believe that, except in the case of very wary lovers—cautious veterans—they are first observed by the objects of the passion.

We are warned from attempting to describe the scene to which our little pioneer had led the way, by the fine remark of a sentimentalist, who compares the language of lovers to the most delicate fruits of a warm climate—very delicious where they grow, but not capable of transportation.

The result of the interview was perfectly satisfactory to both parties; and as this was one of the occasions when all the sands of time are “diamond sparks,” it is impossible to say when it would have come to a conclusion, had it not been for little Rebecca, who seemed to preside over the destinies of that day.

Her father had interpreted his conversation with Jane to his child, and had succeeded in rendering the object and the result of it level to her comprehension, and she had lavished her joy in loud exclamations and tender caresses; till finding she was no longer noticed, she had withdrawn to a window, and was amusing herself with gazing at the passengers in the street, when she suddenly turned to Jane, and raising the window at the same moment, she said, “Oh, there goes Mary to lecture, may I call her and tell her?”

At this moment the sweet child might have asked any thing without the chance of a refusal, and ready assent was no sooner granted, than she screamed and beckoned to Mary, who immediately obeyed the summons.

Mary entered, and Rebecca closing the door after her,



said, "I guess thee will not want to go to lecture to-day, Mary, for I have a most beautiful secret to tell thee; hold down thy ear, and promise never to tell as long as thy name is Mary Hull;" and then, unable any longer to subdue her voice to a whisper, she jumped up and clapped her hands, and shouted, "Joy, joy, joy! Mary, Jane Elton is coming to live with us all the days of her life, and is going to be my own mother."

Mary looked to Mr. Lloyd, and then to Jane, and read in their faces the confirmation of the happy tidings; and to Rebecca's utter amazement, the tears streamed from her eyes. "Oh, Mary!" said she, turning disappointed away, "now I am ashamed of thee, I thought thee would be as glad as I am."

But Mr. Lloyd and Jane knew how to understand this expression of her feelings; they advanced to her and gave her their hands; she joined them: "the Lord hath heard my prayer," she said.

"I thank thee, Mary," replied Mr. Lloyd; "God grant I may deserve thy confidence."

"If she has prayed for it, what then does she cry for?" said Rebecca, who stood beside her father, watching Mary's inexplicable emotion, and vainly trying to get some clue to it.

"Come with me, my child, and I will tell thee," replied her father, and he very discreetly led out the child, and left Jane with her faithful friend.

The moment he had closed the door, Mary said, smiling through her tears of joy, "It has taken me by surprise at last, but for all that I am not quite so blind as you may think. Do you remember, Jane, telling me one day when you laid your book down to listen to Mr. Lloyd, who was



## CHAPTER XVI.

God, the best maker of all marriages,  
Combine your hearts in one.

HENRY V.

WE have anticipated our story, tempted by a natural desire to conclude the history of Mrs. Wilson, that its deep shade might not interfere with the bright lights that are falling on the destiny of our heroine. After the dissolution of her engagement with Erskine, Jane continued her humble vocation of schoolmistress for some months. Rebecca Lloyd had from the beginning been one of her pupils, and a favourite among them; and so devotedly did the child love her instructress, that Mr. Lloyd often thought impulse was as sure a guide for her affections as reason for his. Jane's care of his child furnished him occasion, and an excuse when he needed it, for frequent intercourse with her, and in this intercourse there were none of those mysterious embarrassments (mysterious, because inexplicable to all but the parties) that so often check the progress of affection. Jane, released from the thralldom in which she had been bound to Erskine, was as happy as a liberated captive. Her tastes and her views were similar to Mr. Lloyd's, and she found in his society a delight-



ful exchange, and a rich compensation for the solitude to which her mind and affections had been condemned.

We are ignorant, perhaps Jane was, of the precise moment when gratitude melted into love, and friendship resigned the reins to his more fervid dominion. But it was not long after this, nor quite "a year and a day" (the period of mourning usually allotted to a faithful husband) after her separation from Erskine, that, as she was sitting with Mrs. Harvey in her little parlour, Mr. Lloyd entered with his child. After the customary greetings, Mrs. Harvey suddenly recollected that some domestic duties demanded her presence, and saying with an arch smile to Mr. Lloyd that she "hoped he would overlook her absence," she left the room. Little Rebecca was sitting on her father's knee; she took from his bosom a miniature of her mother, which he always wore there, and seemed intently studying the lovely face which the artist had truly delineated. "Do the angels look like my mother?" she asked.

"Why, my child?"

"I thought, father, they might look like her, she looks so bright and so good." She kissed the picture, and after a moment's pause, added, "Jane looks like mother, all but the cap; dost not thee think, father, Jane would look pretty in a Quaker cap?" Mr Lloyd kissed his little girl, and said nothing. Rebecca's eyes followed the direction of her father's: "Oh, Jane!" she exclaimed, "thou dost not look like mother now, thy cheeks are as red as my new doll's."

The child's observation of her treacherous cheek had certainly no tendency to lessen poor Jane's colour. She would have been glad to hide her face any where, but it was broad daylight, and there was now no escape from the declaration which had been hovering on Mr. Lloyd's lips for some weeks,



talking to Rebecca, that since your mother's voice had been silent, you had never heard one so sweet as Mr. Lloyd's. I thought to myself then you seemed to feel just as I do when I hear the sound of James's voice; not that I mean to compare myself to you, or James to Mr. Lloyd, but it is the *nature of the feeling*—it is the same in the high and the low, the rich and the poor."

"Was that all the ground of your suspicion?" asked Jane, smiling at her friend's boasted sagacity.

"No, not quite all; James has been very impatient for our marriage; and from time to time I have told Mr. Lloyd I wished he would look out for some one to take charge of his house, and I advised him not to get a very young person, for, says I, they are apt to be flighty. I never saw one that was not, but Jane Elton. He smiled and blushed, and asked me what made me think that you were so much above the rest of your sex, and so I told him, and he never seemed to weary with talking about you."

"I am rejoiced," replied Jane, "that your partiality to me reconciles you to the disparity in our ages."

"Oh, that is nothing; that is, in your case it is nothing. Let us see, eleven years. In most cases it would be too much, to be sure; there is just four years between James and I, that is just right, I think; and then, dear Jane, you are so different from other people, you need not go by common rules."

The overflowing of Mary's heart was checked by the entrance of some company. As she parted with Jane, she whispered, "I shall not think of leaving Mr. Lloyd till you are married, be it sooner or later; when I see you in your own home, it will be time enough to think of my affairs."

There still remained a delicate point to adjust: Mr.



Lloyd had been brought up a Quaker, and he had seen no reason to depart from the faith or mode of worship which had come down to him from his ancestors, and for which he felt on that account (as who does not?) an attachment and veneration. He rarely, if ever, entered into discussion upon religious subjects, and probably did not feel much zeal for some of the peculiarities of his sect. He was not disposed to question their utility in their ordinary operation upon common character. He knew how salutary were the restraints of discipline upon the mass of men, and he considered the discipline of habits and opinions infinitely more salutary than the direct and coarse interference of power. He perceived, or thought he perceived, that as a body of men, the "Friends" were upon the whole more happy and prosperous than any other. No litigious contentions ever came among them. This circumstance Mr. Lloyd ascribed in a considerable degree to the uniformity of their opinions, habits, and lives, and to their custom of restricting their family alliances within the limits of their own sect. Mr. Lloyd regarded with complacency most of the characteristics of his own religious society; and those which he could not wholly approve, he was yet disposed to regard in the most favourable light; but he was no sectarian: his understanding was too much elevated, and his affections were too diffused to be confined within the bounds of sect. Such ties could not bind such a spirit. If any sectarian peculiarities had interfered to restrain him in the exercise of his duty, or while acting under the strong impulses of his generous nature, he would have shaken them off "like dew-drops from a lion's mane." Exclusion from the society would have been painful to him for many reasons, but the fear of it could not occasion a moment's hesitation in his offering his hand to a woman whom



he loved and valued, and whose whole life he saw animated by the essential spirit of Christianity. He determined now to inform his society of his choice, and to submit to the censure and exclusion from membership that must follow. But Mr. Lloyd was saved the painful necessity of breaking ties which were so strong that they might be called natural bonds.

Jane had been early led to inquire into the particular modification of religion professed by her benefactor, and respect for him had probably lent additional weight to every argument in its favour. This was natural; and it was natural too, that after her matured judgment sanctioned her early preference, she should from motives of delicacy have hesitated to declare it. If it cannot be denied that this proselyte was won by the virtues of Mr. Lloyd, it is to be presumed that no Christian will deny the rightful power of such an argument.

If the reader is not disposed to allow that Jane's choice of the religion of her friend was the result of the purity and simplicity of her character, the preference she always gave to the spirit over the letter, to the practice over the profession, she must call to her aid the decision of the poet, who says that

“Minds are for sects of various kinds *decreed*,  
As different soils are formed for different seed.”

Not a word had passed between Mr. Lloyd and Jane on the subject of the mental deliberations and resolves of each, when a few days after their engagement, Jane said to him, “I have a mind to improve the fatal hint of my little mischievous friend, and see how becoming I can make a “Quaker cap.”



"What dost thou mean, Jane?" inquired Mr. Lloyd, who seemed a little puzzled by the gravity of her face, which was not quite in keeping with the playfulness of her words.

"Seriously," she replied, "with your consent and approbation, I mean to be a 'member by request' of your society of Friends."

"Shall my people be thy people?" exclaimed Mr. Lloyd with great animation. "This, indeed, converts to pure gold the only circumstance that alloyed my happiness; but do not imagine, dear Jane, that I think it of the least consequence, by what name the different members of the Christian family are called."

"But you think it right and *orderly*," she replied, smiling, "that the wife should take the name of the husband."

"I think it most happy, certainly."

There remained now no reason for deferring the marriage longer than was rendered necessary by the delays attending the admission of a new member into the Friends' society.

It was a beautiful morning in the beginning of May—the mist had rolled away from the valley, and wreathed with silvery clouds the sides and summits of the mountains—the air was sweet with the 'herald blossoms' of spring—and nature, rising from her wintry bed, was throwing on her woods and fields her drapery of tender green—when a carriage, containing Mr. Lloyd, Mary Hull, and little Rebecca, stopped at Mrs. Harvey's door; Jane, arrayed for a journey, stood awaiting it on the piazza; old John, the basket-maker, was beside her, leaning on his cane, and good Mrs. Harvey was giving Jane's baggage to James, who carried it to the carriage. "Farewell, dear Jane," said Mrs. Harvey, affectionately kissing her;—"now go, but do not forget there are other 'friends' in the world, beside Quakers. Return to us soon;



we are all impatient to see you the happy mistress of the house in which you was born."

John followed her to the carriage, and respectfully taking her hand and Mr. Lloyd's—"You've been my best friends," said he; "take an old man's blessing, whose sun, thanks to the Lord who brought Jemmy back! is setting without a cloud. God grant you both," he added, joining their hands, "a long and a happy day. Truly says the good book, 'light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.'"

James was the only person that did not seem to have his portion of the common gladness. He had, with a poor grace, consented to defer his nuptials till Mary's return from Philadelphia. He did not mind the time, he said, "five or six weeks would not break his heart, though he had waited almost as long as Jacob now; and he was not of a distrustful make; but it was a long way to Philadelphia, and the Lord only knew what might happen." But nothing did happen; at least nothing to justify our constant lover's forebodings.

Jane was received with cordiality into the Friends' society, and their hands were joined, whose hearts were 'knit together.'

The travellers returned, in a few weeks, to ———, happy in each other, and devoting themselves to the good and happiness of the human family. Their good works shone before men; and "they seeing them, glorified their Father in heaven." We dare not presume upon the good nature of our readers so far, as to give the detail of Mary's wedding; at which our little friend Rebecca was the happy mistress of ceremonies.

There yet remains something to be told of one of the persons of our humble history, whom our readers may have forgotten, but to whom Mr. Lloyd extended his kind regards—



the poor lunatic, crazy Bet. He believed that her reason might be restored by skilful management—by confinement to one place, and one set of objects, and by the sedative influence of gentle manners, and regular habits in her attendants. He induced Mary, in whose judiciousness and zeal he placed implicit confidence, to undertake the execution of his plan ; but after a faithful experiment of a few months, they were obliged to relinquish all hope of restoring the mind to its right balance. Mary said, when the weather was dull, she was as quiet as any body ; but if the sun shone out suddenly, it seemed as if its bright beams touched her brain. A thunder-storm, or a clear moonlight, would throw her back into her wild ways. “The poor thing,” Mary added, “had such a tender heart, that there seemed to be no way to harden it. If she sees a lamb die, or hears a mournful note from a bird, when she has her *low* feelings, she’ll weep more than some mothers at the loss of a child.”

No cure could be effected ; but Mary’s house continued to be the favourite resort of the interesting vagrant. Her visits there became more frequent and longer protracted. Mary observed, that the excitement of her mind was exhausting her life, without Bet’s seeming conscious of decay of strength, or any species of suffering.

The last time Mary saw her, was a brilliant night during the full harvest moon ; she came to her house late in the evening ; the wildness of her eye was tempered with an affecting softness ; her cheek was brightened with the hectic flush that looks like ‘mockery of the tomb’—Mary observed her to tremble, and perceived that there was an alarming fluttering in her pulse. “You are not well,” said she.

“No, I am not well,” Bet replied, in a low plaintive tone ;



“but I shall be soon—here,” said she, placing Mary’s hand on her heart—“do not you feel it struggling to be free?”

Mary was startled—the beating was so irregular, it seemed that every pulsation must be the last. “Oh!” she exclaimed, “poor creature, let me put you in bed; you are not fit to be sitting here.”

“Oh, no!” Bet replied, in the same feeble, mournful tone; ‘I cannot stay here. The spirits are out by the light of the blessed moon. Hark! do you not hear them, Mary?’—and she sung so low that her voice sounded like distant music:

“Sister spirit, come away!”

“And do you not see their white robes?” she added, pointing through the window to the vapour that curled along the margin of the river, and floated on the bosom of the meadow.

Mary called to her husband, and whispered, “The poor thing is near death; let us get her on the bed.”

Bet overheard her. “No, do not touch me,” she exclaimed; “the spirit cannot rise here.” She suddenly sprang on her feet, as if she had caught a new inspiration, and darted towards the door. Mary’s infant, sleeping in the cradle, arrested her eye; she knelt for a moment beside it, and folded her hands on her breast. Then rising, she said to Mary, “The prayer of the dying sanctifies.” The door was open, and she passed through it so suddenly that they hardly suspected her intention before she was gone. The next morning she was discovered in the church-yard, her head resting on the grassy mound that covered the remains of her lover. Her spirit had passed to its eternal rest!



## NOTE TO PAGE 126.

*"For the story had come that Shay's men would cover their front with the captives."*

THE exhaustion occasioned in Massachusetts by her struggles to support the revolutionary contest, in which her efforts were, at least, equal to those of any other State, and the taxes, which, at the close of the war, were necessarily imposed upon the citizens by the State government, were the principal causes of the disturbances in 1786-7, which are now talked of by some of the older inhabitants, and particularly in the western part of the commonwealth, as the "*Shays war*." It was so called from Daniel Shays, one of the principal insurgents, and now (1822) a peaceable citizen and revolutionary pensioner in the western part of the State of New-York.

This rebellion is certainly a stain upon the character of Massachusetts—almost the only one. It may, nevertheless, serve to exhibit in a favourable light the humane and orderly character of her inhabitants. If there were no wrongs to be redressed, there were heavy sufferings and privations to be borne. The stimulus of the revolutionary war had not wholly subsided, and the vague and fanciful anticipations of all the blessings to be conferred by "glorious liberty," had passed away. The people found that they had liberty indeed, but it was not what they had painted to their fancies. They enjoyed a republican government, but with it came increased taxation, poverty, and toil. Their means were rather straitened than enlarged. From the embarrassment and confusion of the times, debts had multiplied and accumulated; courts were established, and the laws were enforced.



The organization of courts and the collection of debts, formed one of the principal grounds of discontent. The court-houses were attacked and their session sometimes prevented. The party in favour of the State government, and, of course, of the support of the laws, was commonly called the *court party*. An Englishman might smile at such an application of the term.

The insurrectionary spirit was very general throughout the commonwealth; and it might be said that the western counties were in the possession of the rebels against republicanism. It endured, however, but for a few months, and was chiefly put down by the voluntary and spirited exertions of the peaceable inhabitants. While it lasted, there was, of course, a considerable degree of license, and occasional pilfering, for it could hardly be called plunder: but there was little destruction of property, and no cruelty. Sometimes a few individuals of the court party, and sometimes a few *Shaysites* were made prisoners; and in such cases they were shut up in rooms during the stay of the conquering party, and occasionally marched off with them on their retreat.

It is probable that about fifteen or twenty individuals perished in battle during the Shays war. Not one suffered by the sentence of a civil magistrate.

The most severe engagement which occurred during the contest, took place in Sheffield, on the 27th of February, 1787. The government party was composed of militia from Sheffield and Barrington; in number about eighty men, and commanded by Colonel John Ashley, of Sheffield. This party, hearing that the rebels had appeared in force, in Stockbridge, where they had committed some depredations, and taken several prisoners, pursued them for some time without success, and did not fall in with them until their return to Sheffield, to which place the rebels had marched by a different route. The insurgents were more numerous, but possessed less confidence than the government party. This circumstance was every where observable during the contest. Upon this occasion, as the most effectual protection, they placed their prisoners in front of their line, and between themselves and their assailants. They probably expected a parley, and that the parties would separate without bloodshed. This had sometimes happened before, from the great reluctance which all felt to proceed to extremities against their neighbours and acquaintances. But Colonel Ashley was a man of determined spirit, and fully



convinced that energetic measures had become necessary, he ordered his men to fire. They knew their friends, and remonstrated. The Colonel exclaimed, "God have *mercy* on their souls, but pour in your fire!" They did so, and after an engagement of about six minutes, the rebels fled. Their loss was two men killed, and about thirty, including their captain, wounded. The loss of the government party was two men killed, and one wounded. Of the former number, one was a prisoner who had been forced into the front of the rebel line.

If the remembrance of this commotion had not been preserved by the classical pen of Minot, its tradition would, probably, expire in one or two generations.

This is the only civil war which has ever been waged in our country, unless the war of the revolution can be so called.



MISCELLANIES.







## A BERKSHIRE TRADITION.

AN old friend once described to me the following scene, of which, in his early boyhood, he was an eye-witness, and desired me to record it. He is, even now, but slightly bent under the weight of more than eighty years. He has a strong voice, a hearty laugh, a sound memory, and other healthful physical attributes, that as accompanying four-score, will be as incredible to the descendants of the present dyspeptic generation, as is the longevity of the antediluvians to our skeptical cotemporaries.

My friend belonged to one of the aristocratic families of Massachusetts. People then dared to boast that distinction. And even now he may claim a charter of nobility that none will dispute, for he bears a name illustrated by a progenitor who, when he wrote, had no rival, and even now has no superior, upon that topic on which he exercised his marvellous intellect.

It was on a Sabbath day, (I dare not, in this relation, use other than a Puritan term,) late in April, in 1776, that an unprecedented bustle occurred in one of the quietest villages of Berkshire. The stern, long Winter of our hill-country



had just passed away. The tempests of a sterner Winter were beginning in our political world—a Winter whose storm was to drive out all old customs, observances, relations, and to be followed by a Spring of vigorous life, suited to our young country.

The genial sunbeams of the long afternoon played on the few framed houses of the village, and on the Indian huts scattered among them, which seemed to be rooted there, as were the affections of their doomed masters. And did ever savage or civilized man dwell in that sweet valley, who did not cling to it as if it were in truth their *mother* earth!

Times are changed there now. Hideous telegraph poles deform its embowered street, and the “whistle” of the rail-car shrieks from its lowlands. But then, as now, even late in April, Winter lingered on the wet, cold, dull-coloured hill-side; the forest trees were yet brown and naked; but, oh! how fresh and bright was the grass in the meadows—how deep-coloured the furrows just turned up for the corn-planting—how rich the green of the Winter wheat-fields—how sparkling the musical stream that, in the early Spring-time, seemed to sing of nothing but its freedom! And then, as my friend said, “the willows, where we cut our sticks, along the Housatonic, looked as if they had been dipped in melted gold; the maples were flushed with their red buds; the air at our windows was so inviting with the young buds of the lilacs! The girls were longing to go out to pick cresses and violets by the brook side; the hens were cackling—the birds singing—the Deacons could not stop them; but we children had to stay, silent and sad, in-doors, and study our catechisms, and watch—which we did more than study—the shadows, as they crept (how slowly!) over the valley, and up, and up, the Eastern hills; and not till the last purple ray had faded from the



very crest of the mountains, were we permitted to sally forth. With the setting of the sun ended 'holy time.' The Sabbath sun was in our eyes a mortal enemy—so tedious was the long 'holy time' to us. God forgive our parents that it was so!"

On the memorable afternoon we are commemorating, my octogenarian friend, then a boy of seven or eight years, was sitting with the other children of the household, near a window, which afforded a tempting view of the different avenues that converged to the village-green, which village-green was a dangerous competitor with the lucid "Westminster Shorter Catechism," for their bright eyes—the truant eyes had wandered.

"Oh, Phoebe, how pleasant the green looks!" said the boy. "I wish the moon would shine as bright as the sun does; then we could see to play ball after sunset. Don't you wish so, Phoebe?"

Phoebe was a pattern Puritan child, faithful and sedate. Without raising her eyes, she went on, *sotto voce*, committing to memory her appointed task, which, at that moment, happened to be the tremendous answer to the question, in the Shorter Westminster Catechism—the child's spiritual bread and meat of that day—"What is the misery of that estate whereunto man fell?"

"Phoebe," resumed her brother, "do you believe Deacons were ever boys and girls, like we are?"

"All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever," murmured Phoebe.

"Phoebe, Phoebe!" called out her brother again. "I declare, there is Squire Woodhull coming out of his house, and Deacon Orne out of his! Look."



But Phœbe was immovable.

"All mankind, by their fall," she continued.

"Why see, Phœbe! there is Captain Bradley, and Mr. Taylor, too? What can it mean, Phœbe?"

Phœbe was as firm as Atlas.

"And so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever," &c., she reiterated.

It was worthy of observation that these familiar words of eternal doom made no more impression on the serene child than if she were repeating—"Dickery-dickery-dock," or any other of Mother Goose's lyrics.

"Phœbe," resumed her brother, "I never saw any one like you; why don't you look? There comes Levi Carter, and Joshua Lee. They have both got guns. What will Deacon Orne say?"

By this time Phœbe's attention was completely aroused. She closed her little blue book, and the children all clustered together to observe the scene, which was soon interpreted to them by their excellent mother, who came from her nursery, with her infant child, Rhoda, in her arms, beautiful then, as tradition has it, beautiful still, as all can testify who are acquainted with that majestic form, fresh cheek, beaming eye, and most serene aspect.

The gathering on the Sabbath, so astounding to the children, was occasioned by the arrival of an express, bringing news of the battle of Lexington. An association called MINUTE MEN, from the fact that they held themselves ready to go forth in their country's service at a minute's warning, had been formed throughout the towns of Massachusetts. Each man in the village had been notified to meet instantly on the green. The inhabitants were few, but every man ca-



pable of bearing arms, "Minute Men," and others not thus enrolled, came, old and young, each with a comprehension of the sacred principles for which he was to contend, and for which he was willing to leave his home and peril his life. These principles had been maturing in Anglo-Saxon minds from the days of King John and the Charter, and they were now ripened into the glorious truths proclaimed in our Declaration of Independence.

Our men were ready and eager for their work, but not one among them probably had the faintest imagination that the destinies of the world hung upon the issue of the contest on which they were entering.

There were volunteers not enrolled with the Minute men, and the purpose of the gathering was to decide who should be permitted to go, and who should perform the inglorious duty of remaining at home, to take care of the women and children, and keep the Indians in order. "I have not fired a gun these ten years," said Deacon Orne, "but I guess I can do it as well as my neighbours."

One lad nudged another, whispering, "Did not I tell you the Deacon had grit for all?"

"If Mrs. Bradley is willing," said her husband, the Captain, "there's no man readier nor happier to go than I am," he could afford to defer to his help-meet, for the little world of S—— knew their wills were one.

"I ask no woman's leave to do my duty," said little gnarly squally Obid Allen, the well known tyrant of his household. "I go."

"That is doubtful yet," said William Freeman, to whom the command of the minute men of S—— was assigned; "every one cannot have the privilege, Obid, and we must take such only as can be serviceable." William Freeman



was a stout, tall, well-made yeoman, standing six feet two inches without his shoes, some forty-two or three years old, in the prime of manhood, *a living man* in the comprehensive sense of that term, beloved and respected in the little community of S—— as no other man was. Most of the men were zealous patriots eager for the service. The selection made by Freeman, met with unanimous acquiescence. Few wished to dispute it, and none dared. To the astonishment of all, however, Obid Allen was among the picked men. This he explained confidentially to a friend, saying, "Obid will be a wasp among us, I know, and I fear a coward—your tyrants at home, for the most part, are. But to tell you the truth, it was an opportunity to relieve his women folks, and I could not neglect it!"

The dispositions for the march were promptly made. There was no time to be lost. They were to depart that evening. Some among them never to return, some to homes, how changed! some, themselves mournfully changed! One solemn office remained before their dispersion. The children of the Puritans were not men to embark in a serious enterprise without appealing to the great Disposer of events; and now the children's wonder was again excited by seeing the Pastor descending the long straight road from the hill overhanging the village where his house, like a watch-tower on Zion, stood. He was attended by a young friend who was then residing with him. He was himself then still young, though he had already been ten years on a ministry which he was destined to continue in that favoured place, in zeal and purity, for more than sixty years! "Why, mother," exclaimed little Phoebe, "Mr. West is not going to fight, is he? a minister, and such a little man too!"

"Little," exclaimed her brother, "I guess he is as tall as



Alexander, for Master Day says Alexander was not taller than he is."

"I don't know, my child; but don't, my son, let your mind run upon heathen people. Attend to what is going on."

"I guess Mr. Oakley will go, don't you Phoebe?" whispered the rebuked child to his sister—"he is so tall, and beautiful, and has such black eyes! he is something like a soldier!"

Whether Mr. Oakley would have gone or not, had the opportunity been offered him, we cannot say, for the quota was already made up. Perhaps he was glad to avoid the necessity of a choice, for though the colony was the land of his birth and to be his future residence, more than half his life had been passed in England, and it was natural that his affections should be divided. That they leaned to the wrong side, the villagers all thought, and as he approached, there were whispers among them. "He is a friend of Mr. West, or we would give him a piece of our mind!" "This is no time for Tories." "No, nor for fine gentlemen with gloves and ruffles, we must handle things without mittens now-a-days." "Hush, boys!" said William Freeman, who stood a little apart with this knot of free speakers, "don't be saucy to Mr. Oakley, he is my friend as well as the minister's—he is something more than a fine gentleman—a scholarly man, and none the worse for not wanting to fight his cousins and friends whose bread and salt he has eaten on the other side.—You have come in good time, sir," he added, advancing and giving his hand to the Pastor—"every thing is settled, the men are ready to march, and we wait only for you to ask the Lord's blessing on our endeavours."

The twilight was near, the deepening shadows stealing over the valley typified the dark passage through which the



people were to pass, the sun beams on the eastern hills the light beyond it. The men leaning on their guns and staves arranged themselves in a circle around the minister—a group of Indian men and women had gathered, and stood on one side listening reverently. The minister prayed and wept. To the last of his long good life he was marked by a sensibility that gushed forth in sympathy for all his people; the just and unjust—saints and sinners, all shared a heart wide enough for all.

The boy of whom we have spoken, was permitted by his mother to go out and listen to the service. No wonder the scene never passed from his memory.

That war was thus fitly begun in the self-devotion and self-sacrifice of thoughtful fathers, faithful husbands, brothers and sons, and sanctified by the prayers of holy men which was for self-government, an equality of rights and privileges—the freedom and happiness of all. The battle was fought on their mother earth, about their own homesteads. On the other side the soldiers were a good part mercenaries, and aliens from the household for which they fought, and, for the most part, ignorant and brutish men.

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#### A HOME SCENE.

“I have no time to give any directions, Sylvy,” said William Freeman to his sister, a tall, gaunt, elderly woman. “You know full as well as I how to take care of every thing—the horses, cattle, pigs and hens. You’ll give them all plenty to eat, for that’s your nature, and that’s the main chance. Ben will be a plague—boys always are—but he being motherless,



you won't feel it so much. Don't humour him too much, Sylvy. Don't go out, as you did last winter in the snow, and feed the horses that he went to bed and forgot. Take care! don't tie up the portmanteau yet, I want to put this in."

"What is it, brother?" asked Sylvy, who kept her head averted that her brother might not see the tears that were pouring down her cheeks.

"Well, its Lucy's profile that Staunton Oakley cut for me last week—it is only an outline, but I can fill it up with blue eye and round cheeks, and a sweet little fair child's face. You think I am foolish?—I, more than forty!"

"No, no, brother, don't I set by her almost as much as you do—poor little dove."

"Yes, Sylvy, and that is a comfort to me now; if it tore my heart in two to leave Lucy and Willie, I should go, but now I go cheerfully; for I know you will always consider for them. I confide them to you, and go in peace. Lucy is a helpless little thing, but it is my fault. She was so young when we married that she has always seemed to me like a child."

"Oh, never mind, brother, it is easy to care for her—truly the pleasure and comfort of my life."

"I have no words to thank you, Sylvy; but words are nothing between you and I, I have bid her good-bye. It has taken the strength out of me; It makes me feel like a poor soldier," and he wiped away his tears, as he added, "This little woman makes such a child of me. I left her with Willie on her lap, both sobbing; I hear them now. By the way, Sylvy, I have forgotten to tell you that I have engaged Staunton Oakley to teach Will."

"To teach Willie, brother? Willie is but six. I have



heard that Mr. Staunton Oakley is a finished scholar. Surely he is not a suitable teacher for Willie."

"Maybe not. But Oakley is halting about his profession. He is fallen under suspicion as a Tory, and he would like to stay quietly here and mind his books. So I offered him his board for teaching Willie; but if it will be a trouble to you, Sylvy—"

"To me! What trouble can it be to me to get victuals for four instead of three? No, truly, I am glad he is coming. He will be company for Lucy—poor little dove!"

A wagon drove to the door. William Freeman threw in his portmanteau, turned and looked around for the last time. Every object was daguerreotyped on his heart. He kissed his sister's coarse cheek as fervently as if she were the loveliest woman in creation, and knocking with his iron knuckles on his wife's bed-room door, he said, in a cheering tone—"God bless you dear, dearest little wife," dashed off his tears and departed.

As our story has little to do with the military career of the commander of the little detachment from L., but is confined to the domestic incidents of his life, we must take

#### A RETROSPECT.

William Freeman's body, mind and heart, were in that state which, in our present hacknied phrase, would be called normal. Capricious nature—no, this is but vulgar slang—nature is but another name for the great Creator of perfect works; not nature, then, but the transmitted wrongs done to her so often, effect such incongruous combination as a heart of infinite expansiveness in a half-developed body, a gigantic intellect, like Pope's, Napoleon's, or Alexander Hamilton's,



in a stunted, almost dwarfish frame, that when the world has assurance of a man in the highest intellectual and moral attributes, with their fitting majestic investment, he receives, as William Freeman did, the tribute of trust, and love, and reverence. Freeman was of a good old English stock, but the branch in this country had, by adverse accidents, been reduced to an humble condition of life, and William and his sister Sylvy, four or five years older than himself, were left, at an early age, with no inheritance but a sterile farm, on the cold sea-shore of Massachusetts; this they exchanged for one in better position and condition in a lovely valley in the most western county of the same State. This, by the joint management of brother and sister, improved rapidly in value and productiveness. As it was the good custom of those times for a man to take a help-mate so soon as he had a roof to shelter her, it was a subject of discussion among the male and female gossips of S——, why William Freeman remained a bachelor? Some fancied it was from regard to Miss Sylvy, who was a 'set-body,' and had too long governed their joint household to bear a deposition from her feminine supremacy. But they misjudged. Miss Sylvy was as far above the little competitions and meannesses of domestic rivalries as any man. In truth, she was remarkably exempt from any feminine peculiarities. Of the two, her brother had more of the tenderness and softness, and far more of the gentleness and polish that characterizes the minor sex. Sylvy was true as steel, faithful, kind-hearted, and entirely in thought, word and deed, devoted to her brother; but a more masculine creature has seldom appeared in woman's form. So she was made, and she was content with nature's decrees, never opposing them by any compromises, or palliations of dress or habit. If Sylvy had lived in our day she would have deemed a women's rights



convention a superfluous mootings of a foolish question. Her might was her right. She was a woman of action, doing cheerfully and well the duty nearest to her, and not disturbing herself by a theoretical claim to those for which she was neither qualified by nature nor education. Her life had one ruling purpose, the advancement of her brother's interest and happiness—one absorbing affection, not expressed in words, but told in the deeds of every day.

As William Freeman's protracted bachelorship was a mystery not to be solved by people so ingenious, earnest and indefatigable as his neighbours of S——, we should not attempt it. He might have had an early disappointment "down East," but nothing could be more unlikely. Any woman beloved by this magnificent-looking man, frank, affectionate, good-humoured and agreeable, could not choose but to love him. He deferred, on all suitable occasions, to his sister's wishes, but he had no fear of her to prevent his doing what was right; and, besides, she had been heard to say more than once that, "as to marrying, that was not in her way, but she wondered brother put it off—it was a pity for the girls!" She now and then hinted to him that life was going on, and its great work not done! Still he remained in obstinate, inexplicable content—a man sound in mind, body and estate, and yet a bachelor!

Freeman's nearest neighbours were the Scotts. They were a head-over-heels family, with some eight or ten children, that scrabbled their way up into life as they could. Besides these, there was a little orphan niece, Lucy Clay, a fair, delicate, gentle creature, who looked, among the nut-brown Scotts, as a Saxon child might in a Gipsy camp, or a pearl on common earth. She naturally attracted William Freeman's observation. He loved children, and Lucy soon be-



came a favourite. He gave her rides ; he took her to his hay field ; she was permitted to tumble his hay-cocks, and always rode home on the load—the prettiest flower that ever grew, he said, in meadow, or garden. Miss Sylvy was in nowise addicted to pets ; dogs she kept strictly to their official duty, and cats she tolerated only as necessary evils ; but brother's plaything, as she called little Lucy, soon became her *weakness*—the first she had ever shown. Nothing was forbidden her—nothing was good enough for her—she, who never before, was jealous of any thing, was jealous of Lucy's rights in the rough democracy of the Scott's household. She held to children being hardy, but she was alarmed if Lucy dampened her little feet, and finally, upon the little girl letting fall a silent tear on being rather rudely summoned home by one of "Scott's boys," Sylvy could bear it no longer, and she distinctly proposed to her brother that Lucy should have a home with them. "The Scotts," she said, "were overrun with children—she did not see as brother would ever have a family of his own—Mrs. Scott did not take suitable care of her own children—little Lucy, poor little dove, needed the best of care."

There was no need of multiplying arguments to William Freeman. They fell upon a willing mind, and little Lucy was forthwith begged as a boon, and dropped off, by the Scotts, as a burden. We said that Miss Sylvy was not, like most women-kind, addicted to pets, but now it seemed that all the womanly weakness, if it must be so called, that, with others of her sex is diffused over a lifetime, had accumulated, to be lavished on her "little dove"—the first soft epithet she was known to use. Flower-beds were sown for Lucy—chickens were reared for her—kittens were permitted, and dove-cotes were built over the porch.



William Freeman, in his domain, was not less indulgent. William, in rustic phrase, was a great reader, but now he could not fully enjoy his book unless Lucy were sitting by him, stroking her kittens, stringing flowers, or knitting a garter, the hardest task Miss Sylvy ever laid on her. If he drove out she was beside him, permitted to hold the whip, or take the reins; if he sat on the porch smoking, (young men of that day smoked their pipes as they now do their cigars,) she sat beside him. She was a luxury in the house, and like other luxuries, came to be more essential than "necessaries." She lived in a placid, perennial contentment, the inward motions of her heart harmonizing with the symmetry of her lovely face and form. When she was seventeen William Freeman was thirty-five; about this time he became abstracted and fitful; he lost his colour and his appetite. "It was unaccountable," Miss Sylvy said, "how brother was 'running down.'"

Suddenly there was a change; he was brighter, happier, handsomer than ever, and Miss Sylvy who never dreamed of any weaving of sentimental fabrics among her domestic looms, was astounded by the communication that Lucy was to be her brother's wife. She laughed for half an hour.—"Why, what is the matter, Sylvy?" said her brother—"you don't refuse your consent?"

"Brother! No, indeed; but it seems so odd—*little* Lucy!"

"Yes; like the bee, she is little; but her fruit is the chief of sweet things, Sylvy."

"And, you may say more than that, brother; unlike the bee, she has no sting. Well, it's just right; and, if I were not the dumb thing I am, I should have thought of it before.



Lucy would have married—gone away—how in the world could we have lived without her?”

The bans were proclaimed, to the infinite surprise of the good people of S——, who made more than a nine days' wonder of it; all opining that William Freeman might have made a much more advantageous match, and saying that, “if they were he, they should not have chosen such a ‘helpless little piece’ as Lucy Clay.” But, they were not he; and nothing was more natural than for his generous nature to match his strength with her weakness, to extend his protection to her helplessness.

Never did a match of such apparent disparity prove happier than his, for the seven years that followed, and up to the time of the departure we have recorded.

Here we hesitate to go farther. We would fain linger in this paradise of a happy home. But, change comes to all, and happy should they esteem themselves to whom it comes in the common providential forms of sickness, death, and pecuniary trial.

The years went on—every month, every day, and every hour, marked by William Freeman's services to his country. He was rapidly advanced to a colonelcy. We have nothing to do with his public career; but insomuch as it was interwoven with his domestic history. Others may have equalled him in courage and conduct—none surpassed him; and few equalled him in his minute attention to the wants of his men, in his fatherly care of them, and in his general humanity.

How matters were getting on at home may be indicated by the following letters—the first from his son, then eight years old:—



"HONOURED AND DEAR FATHER,

"Mr. Allen came home three weeks ago, and said it was not sure you would be a colonel; but Mr. Oakley saw it in the paper, yesterday, that you are one, and I hurraed and hurraed till my little mother said I should make her deaf. And mother dressed up, and put the blue ribbon you sent her, round her neck, and looked so beautiful; Mr. Oakley said the ribbon was just a match for her eyes, and then such a rosy colour came into her cheeks.

"The little brown heifer has calved; and, though it's such dreadful cold weather that we can't see through the windows, Aunt Sylvy will go out and milk her, to keep her gentle. She says boys will be boys, and she can't trust Ben. Oh, she keeps Ben so busy, for she says—

'Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle *boys* to do!'

"You know why I put the mark under boys, sir? Mr. Oakley teaches me about that. I believe he tries the same way to keep me out of mischief that Aunt Sylvy does with Ben. Don't you think I improve in my writing, sir? He makes me write every day; and I study geography; and he draws maps, and he shows me on the map just where all our soldiers are marching, and where the British and Scotch and Irish come from, and the Hessians. I think they had better stay at home, and leave us to take care of our own *farm*—don't you, dear father?

"Ben and I brought in thirteen eggs yesterday, though it was so cold. Aunt Sylvy feeds the hens high, I can tell you, sir. I don't believe there ever was such a woman as Aunt Sylvy. She takes care of every thing. She comes into our bed-room and tucks up dear little mother, and then she



comes to my trundle-bed and tucks me in; and she warms mother's bed with the great warming-pan; and she warms Mr. Oakley's, but she does not warm mine, because she says she means to make a man of me. I think I am too much of a man already to sleep in a trundle-bed, but then I sleep there to be near my little mother, if she wants any thing. That is right, is it not, sir?

"Is not Obed Allen hateful, father? He came here yesterday. Aunt Sylvy was weaving. There was a fire in the dwelling-room; but Aunt Sylvy didn't ask him to go in there. We don't often have a fire there; for Aunt Sylvy thinks so much of the wants of the poor soldiers, that she saves every way, to have the more to send them. So Mr. Allen sat down in the kitchen, and asked Aunt Sylvy all sorts of questions. Sometimes she answered 'Yes,' and sometimes 'No,' and sometimes she made no answer at all, but kept driving her shuttle.

" 'Mrs. Freeman was not much hurt last evening, was she?' he said.

" 'No,' says Aunt Sylvy.

" 'I heard her head was bleeding when he brought her home—was it?'

" 'No.'

"Don't you think, father, he might have said Mr. Oakley, instead of he?

"He went on:

" 'It's dangerous sport, sledding down hill, and some folks might call it unbecoming and unsuitable for a married woman in *her* situation.'

"Aunt Sylvy looked black as thunder, but she didn't speak. I wanted to shoot him. Was it wrong, sir? Now, sir, I will tell you just how it was. Last night was a beau-



tiful moonlight; and there had been a little thaw and sudden freezing, and the trees were coated with ice, and all hanging with icicles, and every bush and weed and spear of grass sparkled as if it was hung with jewels; and I begged mother to go out with me and let me coast her down the little hill, the smooth path, all glaze ice now, between the laurel-bushes that are as green as they were when the flowers were on them last summer. So, after I had urged her, dear little mother wrapped up, and she and Mr. Oakley came on to the hill. Ho asked her first to go down with him, but she chose me. When we were half way down, she got so frightened that she jumped off and struck her head, and stunned herself; and Mr. Oakley took her in his arms and brought her home—you know he could easy do it, little mother is so light. She soon got over it, and to-day is as well as ever.

“I can’t think how Obed Allen knew any thing about it, for all the boys were sledding down the long hill. But Aunt Sylvy says some people are all eyes and ears to no good.

“Then old Allen tried who he could peck at next. He said Mrs. Orne was spoiling her children in the Deacon’s absence; he said he went into Mrs. Orne’s to carry some letters he brought from the Deacon, and there was one for little Josh, and the boy capered and shouted as if his father had sent him a gold piece. It being bedtime, his sister Nancy took him to put him to bed, and pretty soon she came back, laughing, and said Josh was so bewildered with joy, that, after he had said his prayers, he said, ‘Oh, Nancy, I don’t know whether I said my prayers or Jack Sprat!’

“‘He ought to have been flogged for such profanity,’ old Allen said, ‘and Nancy for laughing at it.’

“Now, dear father, if you have a chance do tell Deacon Orne, and see if he don’t laugh too.



“‘If the boy, in the bewilderment of his innocent joy, did say Jack Sprat, it was more acceptable, I guess,’ says Aunt Sylvy, ‘than some folks’ prayers!’

“I know she meant Obed Allen’s, but he did not take the hint. Pretty soon he nodded his head towards the dwelling-room door, and said:

“‘I should think *she* would want to come out, and inquire about the Colonel, instead of sitting to hear him read verses.’

“‘If you mean my mother, Mr. Allen,’ I said, ‘she has had good long letters from my father, and I guess she don’t want to hear any thing you can say.’

“He looked cross enough, and then said:

“‘Some folks don’t feel as other folks feel, but I should not want that fine fellow sleeping in my best bed, and reading to my wife, while I was out in camp.’

“I don’t know what made Aunt Sylvy so angry at this, but she threw down her shuttle, opened the outside door wide, and said—

“‘Walk *out*, Obed Allen, and never walk *in* again!’

“And as he went out, she said—

“‘Honour and shame is in talk, and the tongue of a man is his fall!’

“It was good enough for him, any way, was not it, sir?

“Well, sir, I believe I have told you about every thing, only that poor old Daisy is on her last legs, Aunt Sylvy says, and she has halter-broken the colt herself; and Mr. Oakley don’t study any more at Mr. West’s, but he is studying law. He is a very kind man—very good to me, and to dear little mother, and to Aunt Sylvy; but there is one thing I don’t like—he lies in bed in the morning till we have all done



breakfast, and Aunt Sylvy has it to get over again. That is not like you, dear father.

"Now I have nothing more at present, sir; only Widow Darley is dead; and Tom, our oldest cat, has disappeared.

"Your ever loving and dutiful child,

WILLIAM FREEMAN, JR.

"N. B. There is first-rate skating on the big pond."

*Mrs. Freeman to Colonel Freeman.*

"DEAR AND HONOURED HUSBAND:—Your 'little wife' (I am glad you still call me so) thanks you from the bottom of her heart for your long letters. How kind of you, after your long days' marches, and your hard, hard work, to sit up at night to write to us, and especially to me, who am but a poor and short letter-writer myself. Oh, my dear heart, when will this tedious war be over, and you be at home again? Not that every thing does not go on very well. Dear sister Sylvy sees to every thing, *does* every thing. I am a poor thriftless wife to you, and I am afraid I shall not even be a mere ornamental piece of furniture—a 'jim crack' of William Freeman's (as you remember who, called me), if you do not soon come home. I am getting thinner and thinner, and you will have to put on your spectacles (I cannot believe you wear spectacles!) to see me.

"Our dear boy is going on wonderfully under Mr. Oakley's tuition. He is very faithful to him. Mr. Oakley goes out very little. He is disliked as a Tory, and looked upon with suspicion, and always hears something disagreeable.

"Our people are always talking of the war, or their crops or their cattle; so he finds it pleasanter with Willie and me. I believe he has made up his mind to the law, but he does



not much incline to any profession, and I should not wonder if he spent his life in reading and writing, and in a sort of dreamy way.

“I shall send by Allen, the cots you requested me to make for Captain Stiles. There are two dozen. I hope they will make his mutilated hand look as well as ever. At any rate any lady in the land would be proud to take it.

“Look in the corners of your handkerchiefs, my honoured husband, and see if you know whose hair I have marked them with. It was taken from that curl you used to say too much of for such a silly little head as mine.

“Sister will tell you all about things, and I remain ever your *do-little*, dutiful, and loving ‘little wife,’      Lucy.”

“P. S. I have scraped all the old linen in the house into lint, and sister will forward as you desire, by first conveyance.

“P. S. again. Mr. Oakley sends his kindest remembrance. I read to him what you said about him; ‘a faithful friend is a strong defence’—he looked up in a startled way, as if he had never heard that precious scripture.”

*Miss Sylvy Freeman to Colonel Freeman.*

“DEAR AND RESPECTED BROTHER:—Your letter was duly received two weeks after date. I thank you for its approving words; also for your profitable advice, concerning the farm, stock, and so forth, which shall—the Lord willing—be attended to.

“But truly, brother, you are the faithful one to family as well as country. If your head-work and hand-work is in camp, your heart is in your own home; and mine seems as if it would burst when I read your loving words to Lucy and



Willie, and to me. But I ain't one that talks about feeling, so I proceed to outside things. I have found the great conveniency of turning round the shed to front south. It has, I believe, saved the lives of the young stock this winter. Its been a cracking winter, but the rougher it is the tougher I grow; and truly, brother, the older I grow the lighter every thing seems, as it were, that I can do for you and yours. The Lord hath greatly blessed me in this, that when I do good, I know to whom I do it.

"The wool has turned out remarkable—partly owing to there being no waste, having sheared myself. The finest I selected for your new suit, and I would not give it for the best broadcloth woven in old England. Lucy has a gown from the same fleece, and which I dyed before pulling, a deep crimson, with a dye of old Kaleny's, and she looks like a bird in it. I could not help saving off a Sunday suit for Willie, the dutifullest boy that ever lived—the boldest—the best. The rest of the wool I have done with as you desired; and the rolls of flannel-cloth are to be forwarded by the committee to your poor soldiers that you say shiver with cold, and never with fear. The Lord help them through.

"As soon as the spring opens, the Committee will see to sending off the surplus potatoes, beans, &c., of which we have a plentiful lot, to some part where they will be of use to the army. I shall send also to you, a box of good cotton-wick dips. I made the same for Mr. Oakley's use—he often reading late at night to Lucy, and thereby trying his eyes. He is a kind man—faithful to Willie. I greatly fear he will never do much for himself. Some weeks he will be a lawyer, and then, when peace comes, he will go back to England and enter the church; and then, he will give himself up to a wandering life, and go to Egypt and the far East. And so he



talks—as changeable as a weather-cock. It was a pity they spoilt him in England. If he had been brought up to work, he might have been made a man of. But, I don't know; I am afeard his laziness is in the bone—you can't make strong cloth out of rotten flax. But, any how, it's a fine opportunity to have such a scholarly man to teach our Willie, and to be company to our little Lucy, and read poetry to her, and such kind of cakes and gingerbread, and keep her content, as it were, and cheerful, while you are away. But a man should be a man, and gird on his sword for one side or the other; or, in these times, handle the axe, and reap the field; and 'hate not laborious work—which the Most High hath ordained.' But he is a beautiful young man, for all—pleasant spoken—and we are as happy a family as we can be when the noble chief and head is gone.

“So, dear brother, I remain faithfully yours, till death,

“SYLVY FREEMAN.”

The above letters, slightly abridged, from those preserved in the family archives, indicate sufficiently the condition of things in William Freeman's family in the third year of his absence. They satisfied his heart—amid all the trials, struggles and privations of his military life, his affections settled in peace over his home. It seemed to him a little kingdom of his own, where the sun always shone, and into whose rest he should enter as soon as his work for his country was over.

His magnanimity, his boldness, and perhaps more than these qualities that belong to physical health and strength; his eminent good sense, his charming good humour, and his indefatigable humanity, won the love of his companions in arms, and drew confidence and favours from the highest quarters. His career was a most active and successful one.



The only time he was ever known to lose his self-command, and with it, as he afterwards confessed, a portion of his self-respect, was on occasion of a visit from Allen, after his return from S——. Allen had attained the place of sutler in the Army—an office admirably adapted to his taste and genius. Freeman had often detected, and corrected Allen's petty impositions and overreachings, but had never lost his temper, and the scurvy sutler had no fear of exciting his anger.

"Why, Colonel, you don't ask after your folks," said Allen.

"No, I have letters from them."

"Yes, but letters don't tell every thing."

"They tell me all I wish to hear—and just what I wish."

"It's pretty judicious to be satisfied with them, may be."

There was something in Allen's manner that conveyed more than met the ear.

"Have you bad news?—speak—don't hesitate—speak—I command you."

"Why, Colonel! we ain't on duty."

"Tell me what you know—what have you heard? Is my wife sick? my boy? my sister?"

"Oh, no, no! nothing like that."

"Why scare me then, man! I suppose one of my horses is dead—or my cattle—they may all die—if the blessed God keep hearty my little family. Yes, though the flock be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the gifts He has given me."

"Don't mount too high a horse, Colonel; pride goes before a fall. I suppose there is something in a family that some men care for besides enjoying health?"



"What in the name of goodness are you driving at, Allen? Were you at my house?—did you see my family?"

"I saw Miss Sylvy, and your boy; he is a stout, healthy lad—but he wants your correcting—he's for'ard, and free-spoken."

"Did you not see my wife?"

"N—o—no. Not exactly see her—I heard them talking and laughing in the dwelling-room—she and that—and that genteel spark you keep there."

"Then they were all well, and at home, and cheerful?"

"Yes, that's true—some folks think something too cheerful."

"And why?—speak plainer, Allen, or I'll shake your meaning out of you."

Allen saw the Colonel was not a man to receive inuendoes. "Well, then," he said, "if I must speak, I must. Folks up there think it ain't every man that would be willing to leave a woman, young enough to be his daughter, and the handsomest woman in all the country round, to keep company month in and month out—year in and year out, with a British-bred Tory spark—a picture of a man!"

"Is that all?" said Colonel Freeman, not a shade darkening his hopeful, trustful face.

"Well, no, not quite all; some folks talk, and some folks think more than they talk."

"Hold your infamous tongue!" cried Colonel Freeman. The Colonel's quarters were in a farm-house. His door opened upon a narrow strip of level ground which descended some ten or twelve feet, precipitously to the road. He opened the door, seized Allen by the collar, and thrust him out with such force that he went down the bank, head over heels, to the road, to the infinite delight of a dozen spectators who knew



him, detested him, and happened to be passing at the moment.

Colonel Freeman was remarkable, even among his self-controlling countrymen, for his equal temper. It was not with him, as with them, the equal pressure on all sides, that kept him subdued and quiet, but it was a magnanimity of nature—an atmosphere too pure and high for storms.

When one of the spectators who had witnessed his practical rebuke said, "If you had broken the fellow's neck you would have served him right."

"No, no," replied the Colonel. "I am sorry I did it—sorry I put my hand upon him—it wasn't right—the poor, weak, bandy-legged, miserable detestable scoundrel that he is—he is not worth it."

Three months elapsed, when Colonel Freeman received a letter from his sister, for the most part detailing the prosperity of the farm and household, and closing thus :

"I am loth to disturb your mind, brother, but it's right you should know the great change that has taken place in the family. Our dear little Lucy has got all of a nerve. No wonder, you so long absent, and exposed to so many dangers. She was fractious for a week, and did not speak to any of us—not even to Willie—and suddenly Mr. Oakley determined to leave; his feelings being grated, I suppose, she having refused for many days to see him. I did not ask questions. He did see her before going. I heard her cry so that it most broke my heart. He went—and he told Willie he had obtained a pass to New-York, and expected to go from there, by the first opportunity, to England. Poor Willie is downhearted—he is writing to you. But cheer up, brother, 'It's a long lane that never turns,' and when you come home all will go smooth again."



Willie's mother had charged him to say nothing to his father of her dejection, and he did not, but lamented grievously the departure, and loss of his tutor.

Colonel Freeman knew that his wife was of a delicate and susceptible constitution. He willingly and lovingly believed that his sister was right in her suggestion—that Lucy's nerves had been weakened by anxiety, and, recalling Allen's suggestions, he thought it probable that the unkind surmises of her neighbors had reached her ears, and that she had decided on parting with Mr. Oakley, and not being able from motives of delicacy to tell him why; and, not willing to distress her husband with her perplexities, she had appeared wayward and dejected. He immediately wrote her a letter full of tenderness, and told her that the moment he could arrange his affairs, he should make her a visit.

But to do this was impossible. The military affairs of the country became more and more perplexed, and the duties more and more imperative. Colonel Freeman was not a man to defer his duty to his country to the indulgence of his domestic claims and affections. From month to month, and week to week, he planned to go home, and was disappointed. In the mean time no extraordinary news came from his family. Miss Sylvy never lost an opportunity of writing. She grew more and more minute in her accounts of her farming economy, and said less and less of 'poor little Lucy,' as she now invariably designated her. What she did say was the truth, but in the least alarming form she could put it. "Poor little Lucy's spirits don't gain." "The poor little woman keeps to her room and says little—her appetite don't improve." "I hope, brother, you'll excuse poor little Lucy not writing. She is low in strength, and dreadful low spirited." So on, and so on, from month to month. But what was more painful to



Colonel Freeman was that his son, whose letters had been pervaded with notices of his mother, now never mentioned her—and that he persevered in his silence even after his father, again and again, reproached him with it. Alas! for the poor boy.

At last, and unexpectedly at last, came to the happy Colonel, the power to suspend his command for a short time, and having obtained leave of absence, he joyfully set his face homeward.

He had, till now, as well as he could, turned aside thoughts of home. Now, permitted, they overpowered and possessed his whole being. Happiness is the health of the spirit, and in his sound nature the tendencies were so strong to it, that anxieties and fears fled from him as demons from daylight. To his happy anticipations his home was the home he had left. His appearance would at once restore his wife—and all would be as it had been, with the added joy of meeting. His return had been so sudden to himself, that he had not announced or even intimated it to his family, but when within a few miles of home, it occurred to him that his unexpected appearance might be too much for his little nervous wife, and he sent forward a courier with a note to his sister. The man was unacquainted with the country—he took a wrong road, and the Colonel, driving rapidly and eagerly forward, arrived before him. He turned up to his own gate. His horses were grazing in the paddock next to his garden; he did not see them. Ben, grown from boyhood to manhood, turned his oxen, who were drawing home a load of hay, to let the Colonel pass, and grinned joyfully at his master, but the Colonel did not speak to him, so full was his heart of the dear people within. He entered through the kitchen. There was no one there, but every thing was just as



he had left it; and he paused for an instant, with a feeling that the long gap of absence was closed, annihilated. It was but an instant, and his heart swelling, and his strong hand trembling, he opened the 'dwelling-room' door. There, too, was vacancy, and silence. For the first time an apprehension entered the Colonel's mind, like the sudden coming of a cloud in the clear sky, a fear, an indefinable dread. He paused—listened. He heard no sound. His wife's bed-room was beyond, and opened out of the dwelling-room. His old dog "Bose" was lying at the door. He opened his eyes, and evidently recognized his master, for he vehemently wagged his tail, but without moving, or making the slightest noise. "Not even my dog moves to meet me!" flashed through the Colonel's mind. Who could comprehend, explain or limit the feelings of that poor old animal who at that moment blended servant and friend? The Colonel shoved him aside with his foot and opened wide the door. It was the middle of a July afternoon, the room was darkened—one of the window blinds being left just open enough to admit the necessary light.

The Colonel's wife was stretched on the bed, covered only with a sheet, and white as the sheet. Her eyes were closed. Her beautiful curling hair lay in tangled masses on the pillow, her arms were outstretched, and her hands tight clasped over her head. This was the only indication that life was still there. Their boy, Willie, sat close to the bedside of his mother, with his back to the door. "Hush, doctor!" he rather breathed, than said, "mother is sleeping;" and then turning round and seeing it was not the doctor, and was his father, for he instantly recognized him, he sprang into his arms, buried his face in his father's bosom, and tried, but alas! tried in vain, to suppress his sobs. One other object



had caught William Freeman's eye, and he, who had never flinched at the cannon's mouth, now shook like a smitten woman. His sister Sylvy was sitting at the farthest extremity of the room, with a new-born baby on her lap. Her eyes once met her brother's—then fell, and she remained silent, and motionless.

The whole story was told. The iron entered the husband's—father's soul. He reeled, and involuntarily grasped the post of the bedstead. His wife awoke, opened her eyes and fixed them on him. This steadied him. She gazed intently for half a minute. Her glance seemed to burn into his very soul.

She uttered a loud, prolonged shriek. The blood rushed into her blanched cheeks, and springing up in the bed, she clasped her arms tight around his neck.

"It *was* a dream—a dream, a horrid dream!—a nightmare!" she screamed. "You are here, my husband!—my honoured, dear husband! It was a dream—my arms are around you, and you don't spurn me—you don't call me that dreadful name! Oh! how they rung it in my ears! It *was* a dream! I see you!—I see you! I was not false—bad! I couldn't be—I loved you—I do love you! It was a horrid dream!"

She paused—she still hung around his neck; but she let her head fall back and gazed intently in her husband's face.

"Why," she said, in her own natural, low, subdued tone, but lower, tenderer than ever—"Why don't you kiss your little Lucy?"

And then, starting away from him as if a harpy had seized her, and flashing her eye around the room, she pointed to the baby, and shrieked:

"There!—there!—there!"

It was a shriek that seemed to comprehend all human woe



"Oh! it was *not* a dream!—it was not a dream!" she screamed, and sinking down, she covered her face. "Oh! hide me—hide me—bury me deep under ground! He has seen me—he hates me! Oh! God of mercy! strike me dead! Why can't I die?"

Colonel Freeman didn't speak. He stood motionless beside the bed. Gloom and misery had settled on his noble countenance. His son threw himself beside his mother; he tore the sheet from her face, laid his cheek to hers, and said—

"Dear, dear mother, don't! Father will speak to you—in a minute he will.

This apparently soothed her. She was quiet for a moment; but the tide flowed back and swept every thing before it. She pushed her boy aside, threw back the tresses of hair that she had gathered over her face, raised up, leaning on her elbow, looked vacantly at her husband, at the infant, at her boy, and broke out into peals of maniac laughter.

Colonel Freeman fled from the room.

"Oh, mother! dear mother! don't!" besought poor Willie.

Sylvy laid down the baby and rushed to the bedside. In her effort to suppress her feelings and her words at her brother's sudden appearance, she had bitten through her lip, and the blood had trickled down over her white, loose gown. The blood stains caught Lucy's eye.

"Did you kill her?" she asked with that sudden change of countenance and flash of intelligence, common in madness.

"Did you, sister Sylvy? Oh! how could you? Well, I don't know that I am sorry; it's all for the best; she was innocent, poor little thing! You are sure she is quite, quite dead?"

"Oh, no, dear child!—she is not dead—she is not harmed. I will take care of her—I will, Lucy."



"Will you? Will you tell him she is innocent? Ask him, beg him, pray him to let her stay with him. I am going where all bad women go—going—going!"

Her utterance became incoherent and confused, and from that time, though her mind was filled with distressful visions, she had rarely and at long intervals any memory, or even faint shadowing, of the realities of her own existence and its dreadful calamity.

Colonel Freeman went to his room—shut and locked the door. His sister went often to the entry that communicated with his apartment, and signified, by her footsteps, that she was there; but there was no response to her, and she understood her brother too well to force herself upon him.

Evening came. Willie said—

"Don't you think, Aunt Sylvy, that my father will come down before bed-time?"

"No—I think not."

"But he has eaten no dinner and no supper?"

"I think he does not miss them, Willie. Go to bed, child; go to bed—you can go to sleep."

"I cannot—I feel as if I never should go to sleep again."

The little fellow crept up stairs, and laid himself down by his father's door, and there he lay a weary hour, listening to the low, sad sounds within; and then the blessing of childhood fell upon him, and he slept till the sun rose. He then made a movement that indicated his awaking, and his father opened the door and drew him into the room. He put his arms fondly over the boy.

"It was kind of you, my child, to lie down there; it comforted me."

"Did it, sir? I am glad."

"You have grown, Willy!"



"Why, yes, sir. I was only a child when you went away."

A slight shiver passed over Colonel Freeman.

"It is a great while—four years the 22d of last April. You have not changed otherwise than being taller, and more manly. You are the same kind-hearted boy—you love your little mother?"

There was an unwonted trembling of his voice on the last words.

"Love her, father! I love her better than any one in the world. I can't help loving her. Can you, sir?"

His eyes fell.

"No, Willie. Tell me, my boy, why you never mentioned your mother all the spring and winter in your letters?"

"She begged me not to, sir; and she used to say, over and over again—'I am not your mother, Willie; I am not your father's wife!' I could not think what she meant; and she cried; so I couldn't do what she asked me not to do."

"I do not blame you, my boy. And now we stand together, and the world sha'n't move us. Go down stairs and ask your aunt to send Ben to me with my portmanteau, and water and towels; and ask your aunt to come to me in half an hour."

"Will you not come to breakfast, sir?"

"If I can, my son; I am not hungry now."

"But, father, you have not eaten since yesterday morning! You will be sick!"

"Don't fear that, my boy. You know I am a soldier, and used to fasting. Go now."

If one so sick at heart could have been sick in body, it would have been an infinite relief.

Miss Sylvy counted the minutes, and in half an hour precisely was in her brother's room. The Colonel had gone



through the renovation of washing and shaving, and he was composed in his manner, but his ghastly paleness, a general tremulousness, and his heavy, dull, sick eye, showed how the strong man had been taken down.

"Sit down, my good sister," he said.

Her brother's composure seemed preternatural to Sylvy; it awed her. She sank into a chair, and said, without addressing him, for she seemed to speak unconsciously,

"My knees are weak. I wonder what ails me!"

"Sylvy," said her brother, "we have a task to do, and we must set shoulder to shoulder. You have ever been the friend that is the medicine of life to me, and so you will continue to be. It seems to me that I have lived ages and ages since I opened that door yesterday. It has been a sorrowful night."

He paused, and wept like a child.

"I didn't mean this should be again," he continued; "but nature will have her way. Sylvy, light has broken upon me. I think the good God has answered my prayer, and given me wisdom to direct my steps aright. I have laid out my course, and with His help I will maintain it. How is she this morning?"

"Just so—lost, entirely lost, but not raving."

"Did she sleep?"

"Yes, a sort of sleep, brother. The doctor gave her opium. Her sleep was full of groans, and sobs, and confused talk!"

"Sylvy, give me in brief the history of the past week—go no farther back—I have made out the fatal story. I speak of it now for the first and last time. Let no friend ever speak to me on the subject. If an enemy does, I shall know how to answer him. I remember when it was you said she had a



falling out with—with—" (his voice choked)—"with Oakley. The last of November he left here. Her life since has been one of remorse and misery. Tell me now, Sylvy, what I asked of you."

"Yes, brother; but I must go farther back than last week. I didn't tell you all in my letters. Maybe I was wrong; but, says I to myself, brother can't leave his duty, and what's the use of distressing him?"

"It was weeks and weeks before her dejection was known to the neighbours. She was always a little house-body, you know—no hand for visiting; and so after you went away, we seldom saw the neighbours, and I am a still body at best. It was enough to tell the work-folks that Mrs. Freeman was not well; and so it went on for weeks, till one day Mr. West called, and after telling me that he had heard that Oakley had got safe into New-York, he asked to see her; I could not refuse him, so I led him right into the dwelling-room. She started and turned pale, for she had got so nervous then she could not bear any thing. Mr. West soon saw how low she was, and he thought it was on account of your long absence, and anxiety, and so on; and the good man's tears ran down his face—he is a dreadful feeling man you know—but he told her she 'ought to submit, and remember she was a professor!"

"'Yes—yes,' she said—it was the first word she spoke—'a professor, and a hypocrite!"

"'But, my dear young friend,' he said, 'you surely have not lost your hope?"

"'I have, I have,' she cried, 'for ever and for ever!"

"He talked long, and handled her as if she had been a little child. You know, brother, how, from the very first she had that about her that made every one gentle with her. But,



then, Mr. West, out of the range of doctrine, and down the pulpit stairs, is gentle to every one. Well, he talked, she not answering a word, but looking steadfastly down. He told her the church and he had been well satisfied with her experience at her examination, and that many a saint had low times,—but that final perseverance was sure. He said that he had known others who, in trying circumstances, or poor health, were tempted by Satan to give up their precious hope. She answered not a word. He told her he would send her his unpublished work on the Atonement, and he did so, and other writings of learned divines on the Perseverance of Saints, and so on. She never opened them—and she begged me never to bring Mr. West into her room again, and wrought me to promise I would not. She said the evil spirit most tormented her when a good spirit was near. But she said little. There were days and days she saw no face but mine, for she said she could not even bear Willie's presence—and then, again, she could not bear to have him move from her side. She never opened one of your letters—she would not even touch them. She said she was not worthy. She had them put in a basket on the table, beside which he sat, and Willie said, many a time, she would bend her head over it, and the tears would fall like rain. You may see them now all crumpled with her tears—poor little dear!”

“Merciful God!” exclaimed Colonel Freeman, starting from his seat with uncontrollable emotion. He was soon again calm. “Proceed, Sylvy,” he said.

“Well, brother—so it went on. I saw she did not get thin or pale—and I kept hoping that when the time for the singing of birds came, and the woods freshened, and the grass sprung, and the blossoms came out, she would rise. But, no, she who had loved all such pretty things, never seemed to



desire any of them now. Day and night I considered about writing to you—but I knew how the country needed all your strength, and how you were harassed, and I much doubted if this were a case that even you could help; not that I ever—for an instant mistrusted the truth. You know, brother, I am not much acquainted with woman's business, and I am not one of the suspicious or observing kind—and truly, truly I should as soon have surmised evil of one of the angels that stand before the Heavenly throne as of our Lucy—poor little dear! I always went into her room before I went to bed, to see if there were any thing to be done,—and night before last, as I was leaving the room, I heard a groan—I turned and looked at her. ‘You are in distress,’ I said.

“‘I am always in distress,’ she answered.

“‘But,’ says I, ‘Lucy, this is something more than common.’

“‘It is!—it is!’ she says, and clenching both her hands, she told me what was coming—‘I shall die,’ she says, ‘I know I shall die; for I have prayed and prayed for that. I have asked nothing else. God is merciful, and he will grant me that. I would rather go now to the fire prepared for me than meet your brother's altered eye.’

“She never called you husband—poor little dear!—from the time her spirits first failed. I was calm, brother. The shock was too great for words, or tears. Her sufferings increased beyond account. I had never been in such a situation before, and though she begged me to let her die alone with me, I dared not. So I roused Ben, and sent for Doctor Lyman. He said not one word when I told him. But he felt. Well, the child was born towards morning. Doctor Lyman was doctor, nurse, and every thing—for I knew no more than you would, brother, what to do. I think



she wandered a little from the moment the child was born. She would see Willie—she would not be denied. Doctor Lyman said it was not safe to refuse her. I told him Willie might be relied on. The doctor went out and talked to Willie himself—I don't know what he said, but I surmise the poor boy knows enough what it all means. Doctor Lyman said, says he, 'Miss Sylvy, keep your doors shut and *locked*. The hellish spirit of gossip is awake in the village,' says he, 'but, if possible, it shall not be gratified this time. For the present, take the best care you can. You know how to keep close—so do I. We will consider for the future. Perhaps I will, myself, go to the Colonel—but we leave that. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. We will shelter her if we can. She is a million times better than those that are ready and glad to believe in her backsliding, 'tigers and foul beasts!' says he."

"Oh, that it should be so—'earth and ashes' as we all are!" groaned Colonel Freeman.

Sylvy had finished her mournful story, and she was not addicted to any prosing comments, least of all at this time was she like to offend in this way. After a few moments' silence, Colonel Freeman said, "Thank you, my good sister; I believe you have done all for the best. There is much wisdom in a good and feeling heart. Tell Dr. Lyman I kindly thank him. I cannot speak even to him on the subject. But, do you tell him, Sylvy, I wish to have no concealments—no false shows—no acting lies. No, say not that last to him. He is an honest man, and meant no wrong. I have my own view of the matter. I wish to shape our life for the equal eye of God, and not with any respect to the erring, presumptuous hard judgment with which man, and woman too, judge their own frail fellow-creatures. No, I have



laid out my course, and with God's help and blessing, I will follow it. I have no blame to throw upon my poor little wife—if she were herself, I would go upon my knees and ask her forgiveness. It is not that I take blame for marrying one so much younger than myself. You know, Sylvy, our love filled up that chasm! But, how could I, deemed a prudent man—arrived at the age of cool forethought and discretion, invite a man—an idle man—with all the qualities pleasing in the eye of a young woman, in the closest intimacy with my wife. I, who was her earthly providence, should have preserved her from temptation, and not thrust her into it. I look back and see that repentance and remorse followed close on transgression. Surely, if a mortal's penitence can expiate sin, she has washed hers out by months of continual tears—by days and nights of untold misery. My life henceforth shall be devoted to her—if she lives. If she dies, and I think she will die, not one reproachful thought will turn to the time since we parted, but I will lay her down in the grave lovingly, and in the hope of a joyful re-union."

"Brother, I thought you would feel so—I know your nature—but—"

"But what, Sylvy?"

"You forget the law, brother—the law of church and state divorces you?"

"Forget!" echoed Colonel Freeman. "She has, herself, divorced us—broken for ever our marriage bond—but what law can prevent my cherishing her as a child—loving her as a child. We have a wide land, Sylvy; if she lives we will take her beyond the reach of the laws she has offended. We will live where God, who forgiveth, will alone take cognizance of us. We will all go together, Sylvy."

"The baby, brother?"



"I have wrestled there, Sylvvy. I cannot see how it is right to cast out from us the only perfectly innocent one among us. And yet to take it with us a perpetual memento, badge, and reproach! I leave that, Sylvvy. I trust to have strength for my duty when the time comes. For the present, find a nurse, and let the poor little heir of shame and sorrow be well cared for."

"But you must leave us, brother, and return to duty?"

"No, I never will leave my home again. Others can as well perform my public duty—none other can do it here. There is my letter to the commanding officer."

He laid under her eye an unsealed letter. Sylvvy read the few words following, which were all it contained.

"My dear Sir—Family afflictions compel me to resign my commission. With ardent prayers for my country—all I can now give her—

"I remain, respectfully yours, &c."

The dishonour of Colonel Freeman's house was soon known through the little community of S——. The weak had their pleasure in the mean "I told you so!" The wicked scoffed; the hard-hearted thought the Colonel should be dealt with for winking at sin; the pitiful dropped a tear over their erring sister, and said nothing. There were a few magnanimous minds that sympathized with the divine qualities of Colonel Freeman, and felt how much greater was the husband, who could hold an even scale, who could forgive and succour, than he who crushes and avenges. Mercy is thrice blessed. "Pride is hateful before God and man."

"Man proposes—God disposes," as the projects and disappointments of every day show. Colonel Freeman took his breakfast with his sister and son. Ben, and a small servant



girl, as was the custom of the time, even with most of our New England gentry, sitting at one end of the table. The Colonel was calm and self-possessed. He commended Miss Sylvy's bread—he had never seen as good, he said, since he had left his own home. "The making of good bread was one of the first of duties—but few," he said—and there was a faint, but benign smile on his face as he looked to his sister in saying it—"but few performed it." He thanked the zealous little girl who had been out in the dewy field to pick the strawberries for his breakfast. He asked Ben about the planting and the stock. The storm had swept over him, but it had left him lord of himself.

"You praise every thing, but you don't eat, father!" said poor Willie, who watched him intently.

"Don't be anxious, my dear little boy—I am a strong man, and can bear a long fast. In a day or two I shall do my part." He could not, with all his resolution and effort, do it now; and he hastily left the table and joined Dr. Lyman, who he knew was awaiting him in his wife's apartment. She was awake. She turned her eyes, glancing on him, and they followed him as he passed round to the foot of the bed. She was quiet, but it was a fearful calm, an absence of the sense from which emotion and passion spring. Colonel Freeman came round to the side of the bed. He took her hand. It was passive in his. He stroked her hair from off her brow as he had been used to do when she was a little girl. Not a muscle moved. "Lucy,—dear little Lucy!" he said. She made no reply—no movement. He bent over her, and his hot tears fell on her white cheek. She didn't feel them. He started away from her, and paced up and down the room. She raised her head and leaned on her elbow—her eyes still



intently fixed on him. Having knit his mind to the worst—"Are her senses utterly gone, Doctor?" he asked.

"I cannot tell you, my dear sir—it looks so, I confess—but I think not utterly. She has spoken to me. She seems to be possessed with one idea. Mrs. Freeman, do you know who you are looking at?"

"I know *what* I am looking at," she answered, speaking in her natural voice, but with an inflexible harrowing monotony; "but you do not, Doctor,—one shadow cannot see another. I excuse you sir,—but you need not talk about it. I am a real living being, and talking rather worries me. Pass this way—pass this way." She motioned her hand to her husband, and he came again to the bedside.—"There it is, just so, Doctor. They are all gone—there's nothing but shadows left!"

And so it seemed to her. This one idea had taken possession of her mind. God had dealt mercifully with her. The great facts of her life were stricken from her memory. The faculty was not utterly lost; for several days following she continued to call the Doctor, Sylvy, and Willie by name—always maintaining they were mere shadows. Doctor Lyman laid the baby on her arm, hoping the intense feeling connected with its existence might stimulate her mind to more rational action. But it failed of this effect. She only said in the same unvarying tone, "It is but a little shadow, but it makes me cold—take it away, if you please."

One after another was lost from her memory. Her husband lived alone there, if that could be called life which to her was but the shadow of life. Day after day—weeks—months—*years*! passed on and there was no change. The only feeling she manifested was a preference of her husband's to all other "shadows," as she called them. She made little



demonstration, even of this. She had a desire, as most people under a nervous derangement have, to be in the open air, and she was permitted to walk in the fields behind the house. No one but Colonel Freeman could induce her to return to it. He had but to join her and turn towards the house—she followed, often repeating “that shadow draws me after it!” The only food she tasted was that he brought her. His patience and tenderness never abated. It was wonderful to see a man in the vigour of his manhood—a man who had commanded a regiment in perilous and perplexing times, who had won laurels in many battles, become the gentle nurse—circumscribing his life, and renouncing power and fame, and all that most men most love, most eagerly pursue.

He built an apartment for her with a southern aspect—hoping, as he said, that the sun and moon would be God’s ministers to her. He bought sweet singing birds, and put them in cages by her window.

He planted lilacs and damask roses—the only flowering things then domiciliated in Berkshire, about her window, and he trained around it a monthly honey-suckle, obtained, at much pains. Thus the “Flower Angel” was ever near her, expounding the parable of that modern Sirach, Edie Ochiltree, who says “it is to teach us not to slight them that are in the darkness of sin and the decay of tribulation, that God sends odours to refresh the withered hour.”

A coarse jest at the expense of Colonel Freeman might have passed round in the congregation of vulgar men at the village bar-room, and there might have been depreciating whispers from some female Pharisee of a tea-drinking—but for the most part, men, women and children united in a sentiment of reverence for the Freemans.

Taking into account what human nature is, we must at-



tribute a portion of this to the natural dignity and commanding presence of Colonel Freeman, to his soldierly reputation, and to the purity of a life without reproach, which latter carries with it a stronger prestige than the "divinity that doth hedge about a king." There was a single exception to this general current of respect.

Obed Allen returned to his home at the close of the war, one of the few enriched by its employment, and puffed up, and glorying in his shame. The very day after his return he met Col. Freeman at the village Post-Office. Mail-day was then once a week, some great news was expected, and the little room was crowded with men and lads from all the districts of the town. Allen had not been long enough at home "to take an observation," (to borrow a seaman's phrase,) that is (in our village parlance) he had not ascertained "the mind of the street," and obedient to his own low instinct, he ventured to the Colonel a jocular reference to the warning he had given him. Colonel Freeman said nothing, but sent a glance through Allen, which, a bystander said, put him in mind of the promise: "I will give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions;" there was a general cry of "shame!" and Allen was hustled round the room, and kicked out the door, and that very evening, a brilliant moonlight one, the lads of the village rode him on a rail—a species of Lynch law then much in fashion.

We have but one more incident to relate before we close this sad, but we hope not quite useless story. Soon after the Peace, an English packet was transmitted to Colonel Freeman, by official hands. He was alone with his sister when he received it, and pleased and curious as one is at receiving an important-looking dispatch, he turned it first on one side, and then on the other, examined the stamps and the hand-



writing, and said, "Why, Sylvy, one would think I was still somebody—a colonel at the head of a regiment."

"Open it, brother—open it," said Sylvy, impatiently.

"Foreign Embassy! Secretary of Legation!" murmured the Colonel, still reading the impressions—"what can this mean?"

"Open the letter, brother, open it—that is the shortest way to find what is in it."

The Colonel smiled and broke the seal—and first read the envelope which was merely a certificate of the genuineness of the inclosure. He broke the second seal, and read as follows:—

"My dear Sir—I have just succeeded to the possession of an immense fortune, and hasten to offer you the only reparation in my power for a wrong deeply regretted by—  
Yours with sentiments of immeasurable respect—

"STANTON OAKLEY."

Inclosed within this letter was a draft for ten thousand pounds sterling. Colonel Freeman threw the letter across the table to his sister without speaking a word.

"How dare he!" she exclaimed as she finished reading it. "*Regretted!*" what a flimsy word for one who has no right all his life to talk or think of any thing but sackcloth and ashes. How will you answer it, brother?"

"There is but one way. I shall return his letter and draft through the hands that forwarded it. My handwriting of the superscription will be explanation enough to him."

By an inexplicable coincidence, marked events of life seem to fall together. Miss Sylvy went habitually early to Mrs. Freeman's room, and washed and dressed her, as when she had first come to live with her, and she was as do-



cile and gentle in her hands now as in childhood. She had always found her out of bed, and usually pacing up and down the room, for, with the wakefulness that characterizes insanity, her sleep ended with the first ray of daylight. On the day after the receipt of Oakley's letter, on going to perform her morning office, she found Lucy still in bed. Miss Sylvy approached the bed, and sat down, for she found, to her surprise, that her patient was, as she believed, still sleeping, and as she looked nearer, she thought much changed. There was a slight knitting of the brow which had been smooth from vacuity—the blue veins showed a quick and irregular beating of the heart. Soon she perceived a movement of the eyeballs through the almost transparent lids, and a tremulousness of the lids; and in a few moments, closed as they were, one tear stole after another over her deathly pale cheek. Sylvy gently wiped them away.

“Thank you, dear—good—sister,” said Lucy, in the lowest, feeblest whisper, “but don't speak to me, now—sit still, by me.”

Sylvy obeyed—every minute seemed an age. But in a few minutes she again spoke.

“Call your brother,” she said, “and Willy—and lay my baby on my pillow.”

“I will call them—but, your baby—dear little Lucy—your baby is in heaven. She lived but a year.”

“A year!” She opened her eyes, wide, and spoke with great increase of force. “Why, I thought it was but yesterday, sister; a year! how strange! But she is in heaven, you say—God is good and merciful! Call them, Sylvy.”

Sylvy communicated the change to her brother and nephew—now a charming lad of fifteen. They hastened, with throbbing hearts and suppressed emotion, to the bed of the



dying wife and mother. They both bent over and kissed her and then knelt beside her. Colonel Freeman wore his hair long over his temples; it was silvered, but it still retained the softness and waviness of his youth. She put up her little hand and held it off his brow and looked calmly and intently into his eyes till her arm dropped from weakness.

"My friend!—father!—husband!" she faintly articulated, "may I call you husband?"

"Oh, Lucy!—dear wife!—yes!"

"You have forgiven me?"

"Forgiven!—don't speak that word—you are dearer to me than my own soul. Don't," he said, speaking with perfect calmness, for he feared a breath might hurry away her fluttering spirit, "don't speak of the past—don't think of it, dearest child."

"I must speak—for I am going away from you all; and I have much to say. How long is it since you came home and stood there at the foot of the bed and looked at me? Oh, my heart! be still one minute." She laid her hand on her throbbing heart. "And Willie was there where he is now, and Sylvy sat by the table, with my poor baby—how long?"

"Four years, yesterday!"

"Four years!—*four years!*—how strange—strange! I thought it was yesterday morning. I remember nothing since, but a strange dream of shadows—and a long, long walk with you, my husband—up through the clover-field, and being so tired—and a feeling that you loved me, and pitied me—and that you all would love me if you were any thing—but you seemed all, but shadows. You took care of my sinless baby, dear husband? God received it, and you, I know, did not cast it out."

"I did not, my child. Sylvy took it to her own room—



and we got a wet-nurse for it—and they told me it thrived—but at the end of the year it pleased God suddenly to take it. I did what I could for it—I never saw it.”

Lucy drew a deep sigh. “Right—perfectly right,” she said. “What a long dream I have had—four years! I waked from it early this morning. It seemed to me, this was not my room.”

“No, dear child, it is a room I built for you.”

“How strange—I got out of bed and crept, I was too weak to walk, to the window. I opened the shutter, the clouds were rose-coloured. I had a feeling I should soon be beyond them. There was the sweetest scent came into the windows—it seemed to me the breath of an angel. I tried to think, I could not think, but the past came back—one thing after another, as we see objects as the light of day increases. And I had no distress—no distress. It seemed to me, you all loved me, all were at sweet peace with me! I recalled that hour of darkness and distress, when you came home, my honoured husband; I seemed again to see your look of pity, and compassion and forgiveness, and it was that gave me a sense of God’s infinite mercy—yes, peace fell upon me, God’s peace, and all the world cannot take it away.” She spoke in the lowest audible tone, and audible only in profound silence, and to senses made most acute by intense feeling. “Stand up, dear Willie,” she said. “Oh—how tall—it is four years! Willie, put your cheek down to mine, dear. Willie, when you are a man, you will not blush at your mother’s name? the sin that has been repented in tears, and misery not to be told as mine has—that God and man has forgiven, you will not blush for, my son?”

“Oh, no—dear mother, no—never!”

“Sylvy,” resumed the dying woman, “I have not breath



to thank you. How long-suffering, and slow to anger you were."

"Oh, dear little Lucy," said the faithful creature, "don't waste your breath on me—I did nothing, I could not do any thing for you—but love you—that I did."

A faint smile played over Lucy's pale—still beautiful lips. "Yes—and doing that you could do—did do all the rest," she said—"Sylvy, I have a message for Mr. West. Give my respectful love to that good man, and tell him God has taught me better than when I cried in my despair that my hope was gone for ever, and for ever—tell him that I returned to Him who forgiveth and upbraideth not—and fell asleep in my Heavenly Father's arms." She then again kissed Willie, motioned him aside, and drew her husband to her. "My husband," she said, "dearest—best—we are again united!"

"Yes, my wife," he answered, "for ever and for ever!"

A gleam of joy shot through her eyes, a heavenly brightness overspread her whole face, it came and went like a flash of lightning, but it left an ineffaceable impression on those faithful ones who saw it. To them it was a preternatural light—a visible token of God's presence.

Two days after, the neighbours assembled to perform the last services. When Mr. West rose to make the prayer, he repeated, with a trembling voice, and overflowing eyes, the message of the departed to him. It was his only allusion to any thing peculiar in the circumstances of their friends. The good man's mind, glowing with a sense of God's infinite love, kindled with divine life spirits lower than his own.

Lucy Freeman was tenderly and reverently borne to her grave, and when the sods were laid upon it, human, for once, reached heavenly love—there was more joy, on earth as in



heaven, over one that repenteth, than over ninety and nine that had not gone astray.

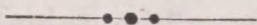
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Colonel Freeman returned to life, not with a bowed head and faint heart, but with that cheerful activity that springs from an assured faith in God, and love to man. The only indication that he had suffered more than others appeared in pity for the erring, and earnest efforts to reclaim them, and in sympathy with every form of sorrow. It was said of him that not a day passed over his head without some good, purposed and done. The prosperity of his outward life overflowed the more barren condition of his neighbours.

His son grew up to place and honour in the State. He kept his promise to his mother. Her name was transmitted to his children a dear, familiar, honoured household word. And when he laid his father (after a serene and sound old age) in a grave beside her in our village burial-ground, it was with "a peace that passeth understanding."



## THE WHITE SCARF.



“Be just, and fear not.

Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
Thy God's, and truth's ; then, if thou fallest, O Cromwell,  
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr.”

THE reign of Charles the Sixth is one of the most humiliating periods of the French history, which, in its centuries of absolute kings and unquestioning subjects, presents us a most melancholy picture of the degradation of man, and of the disheartening prolongation of the infancy of society. Nature had given Charles but an hereditary monarch's portion of brains, and that portion had not been strengthened or developed by education or exercise of any sort. Passions he had not ; he never rose to the dignity of passion ; but his appetites were strong, and they impelled him, unresisted, to every species of indulgence. His excesses brought on fits of madness, which exposed his kingdom to the rivalry and misrule of the princes of the blood. Fortunately for the subsequent integrity of France, these men were marked by the general, and, as it would seem, constitutional weakness of transmitted royalty ; and were besides too much addicted to pleasure, to



crave political independence or renown in arms, the common passions of the powerful and high-born.

Instead of sundering the feeble ties that bound them to their allegiance, and raising their princely domains to the independence of the crown, they congregated at Paris, then, as now, the Paradise of the devotees to pleasure, and surrendered themselves, as their chroniclers quaintly express it, to "*festins, mascarades, danses, caroles et ébattemens*," (every species of diversion,) varied by an occasional affray, an ambuscade, or an assassination. The talent, that is now employed upon the arts of life, in inventing new machines, and contriving new fabrics, was then exhausted in originating new pastimes. Games of cards, and the revival of dramatic entertainments, date from the period of our story—the beginning of the fifteenth century.

There shone at Charles's court one of those stars, that occasionally cross the orbit of royalty, whose brilliancy obscured the splendour of the hereditary nobility,—the lights, that, according to conservative opinion, are set in the firmament to rule the day and night of the plebeian world.

In the month of September, of the year 1409, a stranger, attended by a servant with a small travelling-sack, knocked at the gate of a magnificent *hôtel* in Paris. He was answered by a porter, who cast on him a glance of inquiry as keen as a bank clerk's upon the face of an unknown bank-note ; and, seeing neither retinue, livery, nor other insignia of rank, he was gruffly dismissing him, when the stranger said, "Softly, my friend ; present this letter to the Grand-Master, and tell him the bearer awaits his pleasure ! Throw the sack down within the gate, Luigi !" he added to his attendant, "and come again at twelve ;" and, without more ado, he took his station within the court, a movement in which the porter ac-



quiesced, seeing that in the free bearing of the stranger, and in the flashing of his dark eye, which indicated, it were wise not to question an authority that had nature's seal. On one side of the court was a fountain, and on the other a group of Fauns, rudely carved in wood. Adornings of sculpture were then unknown in France;—the art was just reviving, and the ancient models still lay buried under barbaric ruins. Two grooms appeared, conducting, in front of the immense flight of steps that led up to the hôtel, four horses caparisoned for their riders, two for females, as was indicated by the form of the saddles, and the gay silk knots that decked the bridles, one of them being studded with precious stones. At the same moment, there issued from the grand entrance a gentleman, and a lady who had the comely *embonpoint* befitting her uncertain "certain age." She called her companion "*mon mari*," and he assisted her to mount, with that nonchalant, conjugal air, which indicate that gallantry had long been obsolete in their intercourse.

The interest the wife did not excite, was directed to another quarter. *Mon mari's* eye was constantly reverting to the door, with an expression of eager expectation. "Surely," said the lady, "Violette has had time to find my *eau-de-rose*;—let us go, my husband,—we are losing the freshness of the morning. She may follow with Edouard."

"Go you, *ma chère amie*," replied her husband. "Mount, Edouard, and attend your mistress,—my stirrup wants adjusting,—I'll follow presently. How slow she rides! a plague on old women's fears!" he muttered, as she ambled off. "Ah, there you are, my morning star," he cried, addressing a young girl who darted through the door, and appeared well to warrant a comparison to the most beautiful of the celestial lights. She wore a Spanish riding-cap, a cloth dress, the waist neatly



fitted to her person, and much in the fashion of the riding costume of the present day, save that it was shorter by some half-yard, and thus showed to advantage a rich Turkish pantalette and the prettiest feet in the world, laced in boots. "Is my lady gone?" she exclaimed, dropping her veil over her face.

"Yes, Violette, your lady is gone, but your lord is waiting for my lady's *mignonne*. Come, mistress of my heart! here is my hand for your stepping-stone." He then threw his arm around her waist, under the pretext of assisting her to mount; but she darted away like a butterfly from a pursuer's grasp, and, snatching the rein from the groom's hand, and saying, "My lord, I am country bred, and neither need nor like your gallantries," she led the horse to the platform on which the Fauns were placed, and, for the first time seeing the stranger, who stood, partly obscured by them, looking curiously upon this little scene, she blushed, and he involuntarily bowed. It was an instinctive homage, and she requited it with a look as different from that which she returned to the libertine gaze of the Count de Roucy, as the reflection in a mirror of two such faces, the one bloated and inflamed, the other pure and deferential, would have been. Availing herself of the slight elevation of the platform, she sprang into the saddle and set off at a speed that, in De Roucy's eye, provokingly contrasted with her mistress's cautious movement. "Who are you, and what do you here?" he said, turning to the stranger.

"My name," replied the stranger, without condescending to notice the insolent manner of the question, "is Felice Montano, and I am here on business with the Grand-Master."

"Did ye not exchange glances with that girl?"



"I looked on her, and the saints reward her, she looked on me."

"*Par amour ?*"

"I stand not here to be questioned;—I ne'er saw the lady before, but, with Heaven's kind leave, I shall see her again!"

"Take care,—the girl is my wife's minion, the property of the house,—ye shall be watched!" muttered De Roucy, and, mounting his horse, he rode off, just as the porter reappeared, attended by a *valet-de-place*, whose obsequious address indicated that a flattering reception awaited Montano.

Montano was conducted up a long flight of steps, and through a corridor to an audience-room, whose walls were magnificently hung with tapestry, and its windows curtained with the richest Oriental silk. Silver vases, candelabra of solid gold, and various costly furniture, were displayed with dangerous profusion, offering a tempting spoil to the secret enemies of their proprietor.

There were already many persons of rank assembled, and others entering. Montano stood apart, undaunted by their half insolent, half curious glances. He had nothing to ask, and therefore feared nothing. He felt among these men, notorious for their ignorance and their merely animal lives, the conscious superiority of an enlightened man, that raised him far above the mere hereditary distinction, stigmatized by a proud plebeian as the "accident of an accident." Montano was an Italian, and proudly measured the eminence from which his instructed countrymen looked down upon their French neighbours.

As he surveyed the insolent nobles, he marvelled at the ascendancy which Jean de Montagu, the Grand-Master of the Palace, had maintained over them for nearly half a century.



The son of a humble notary of Paris, he had been ennobled by King John, had been the prime and trusted favourite of three successive monarchs, had maintained through all his capricious changes the favour of Charles, had allied his children to nobles and kings, had liberally expended riches, that the proudest of them all did not possess, had encouraged and defended the labouring classes, and was not known to have an enemy, save Burgundy, the fearful "*Jean sans peur*."

The suitors to the Grand-Master had assembled early, as it was his custom to receive those who had pressing business before breakfast, it being his policy not to keep his suitors in vexing attendance. He knew his position, even while it seemed firmest, to be an uncertain one; and he warily practised those arts which smooth down the irritable surface of men's passions, and lull to sleep the hydra, vanity.

"The Grand-Master is true as the dial!" said a person standing near Montano; "the clock is on the stroke of nine;—mark me! as it striketh the last stroke, he will appear."

Montano fixed his eyes on the grand entrance to the saloon, expecting, that, when the doors "wide open flew," he should see that Nature had put the stamp of her nobility on the plebeian who kept these lawless lords in abeyance. The portal remained closed, there was no flourishing of trumpets, but, at a low side-door, gently opened and shut, entered a man of low stature, and so slender and shrunken, that it would seem Nature and time had combined to compress him within the narrowest limits of the human frame. His features were small, his chin beardless, and the few locks that hung, like silver fringe around his head, were soft and curling as an infant's. He wore a Persian silk dressing-gown over a citizen's simple under-dress, and his tread was so light, his manner so unpretending and unclaiming, that Montano would



scarcely have looked at him a second time, if he had not perceived every eye directed towards him, and certain tokens of deference analogous to those flutterings and shrinkings that are seen in the *basse cour*, when its sovereign steps forth among his subdued rivals. But, when he did look again, he saw the fire glowing in a restless eye, that seemed to see and read all at a glance,—an eye that no man, carrying a secret in his bosom, could meet without quailing.

“Your Grace believes,” said the Grand-Master to the Duke of Orleans, who had been vehemently addressing him in a low voice, “that these mysteries are a kind of divertisement that will minister to our sovereign’s returning health?”

“So says the learned leech, and we all know they are the physic our brother loves.”

“Then be assured, your poor servant will honour the drafts on his master’s treasury, though it be well nigh drained by the revels of the late marriages. The king’s poor subjects starve, that his rich ones may feast; and children scarce out of leading-strings are married, that their fathers and mothers may have pretexts for dances and masquerades.”

“Methinks,” said the Count de Vaudemont, the ally and messenger of Burgundy, “the Grand-Master’s example is broad enough to shelter what seems, in comparison of the late gorgeous festival within these walls, but the revels of rustics.”

“The festivals within *these* walls are paid with coin from our own poor coffers,” replied the Grand-Master, “not drawn from the King’s treasury, and rusted with the sweat and tears of his subjects. But what have we here?” He passed his eye over a petition to the King, from sundry artisans, whose houses had been stripped of their movables by the



valets of certain Dukes,—these valets pleading the common usage of justification of this summary process. “Tell our good friends,” he said, “it shall be my first business to present this to our gracious sovereign; but, in the mean time, let them draw on me for the amount of their losses. I can better afford the creditor’s patient waiting than our poor friends who, after their day’s hard toil, should lie securely on their own beds at night. Ah, my lords, why do ye not, like our neighbours of England, make the poor man’s cottage his castle.” After various colloquies with the different groups, in which, whether he denied or granted, it was always with the same gracious manner, the same air of self-negation, he drew near to De Vaudemont, who stood apart from the rest, with an air of frigid indifference, and apparent unconsciousness of the Grand-Master’s presence or approach, till Montagu asked, in a low and deferential tone, “What answer sendeth his Grace of B-b-b-b-b—?” Montagu had a stammering infirmity, which beset him when he was most anxious to appear unconcerned. He lowered his voice at every fresh effort to pronounce the name, and this confidential tone gave a more startling effect to the loud, rough voice, in which the party addressed pronounced, “Burgundy! his Grace bids me say, that for some diseases blood-letting is the only remedy.”

“Tell Burgundy,” replied the Grand-Master, now speaking without the slightest faltering, and in allusion to the recent alliance of his own with the royal family, “tell Burgundy, that the humblest stream that mingles with the Ganges becomes a portion of holy water, and that blood-letting is dangerous when ye approach the royal arteries! Ah!” he continued, turning suddenly to Montano, grasping his hand, and resuming his usual tone, “You, I think, are the son of Nicolás Montano, —welcome to Paris! You must stay to breakfast with me.



I have much to ask concerning my old friend. It is one and twenty years since your mother put my finger in your mouth to feel your first tooth. Bless me, what goodly rows are there now ! So time passes !”

“ And where it were once safe to thrust your finger, it might now be bitten off. Ha ! Jean de Montagu ?” growled Vaudemont.

“ When there are wolves abroad, we take care of our fingers,” coolly replied Montagu.

These discourteous sallies and significant retorts were afterwards remembered, as are the preludes to an earthquake after the catastrophe has interpreted them. The assembly broke up, Montagu bidding his young friend to take a stroll in the garden, and rejoin him at the ringing of the breakfast bell. When that sounded, a valet appeared and conducted Montano to a breakfast room, where game, cakes, and fruit were served on plate, and the richest wine sparkled in cups that old Homer might fain have gemmed with his consecrating verse. “ I had forgotten,” said Montagu, “ that a boy of two and twenty needs no whetting to his appetite ; but sit ye down, and we will dull its edge. Ah, here you are, De Roucy. We have a guest to season our fare this morning, the son of my old schoolmate, Nicoló Montano.” De Roucy bowed haughtily, and Montano returned the salutation as it was given. “ Why comes not Elinor to breakfast ?” asked Montagu of the Count de Roucy, who was the husband of his eldest daughter.

“ She likes not strangers.”

“ God forgive her ! Felice Montano is no stranger ;—the son of her father’s first and best friend,—of the playfellow of his boyhood,—of the founder of his fortunes, a *stranger* !”

“ I thought you had *woven* your own fortunes, sir.”



"So have I, and interwoven with them some rotten threads. Think not, De Roucy, I do not notice, or that, noticing, I care for your allusion to my father's craft. Come hither, Pierre." De Roucy's son, a boy of seven, came and stood at his knee. "When you are grown a man, Pierre, remember, that, when your father's fathers were burning cottages, bearing off poor men's daughters, slaughtering their cattle, and trampling down their harvest-fields,—doing the work of hereditary lordlings,—my child, your mother's ancestors were employed in planting mulberries, rearing silkworms, multiplying looms,—in making bread and wine plenty, and adding to the number of happy homes in their country."

"But, grandpapa, I won't remember the wicked ones that stole and did such horrid deeds!"

"Ah, Pierre, you will be a lord then, and learn in lordly phrase to call stealing *levying*. Go, boy, and eat your breakfast;—God forgive me! I have worked hard to get my posterity into the ranks of robbers!"

At another moment, Montano would have listened with infinite interest to all these hints, as so many clues to the history and mind of a man who was the wonder of his times; but now something more captivating to the imagination of two and twenty, than the philosophy of any old man's history, occupied him, and he was wondering, why no inquiry was made about the companion of the Countess, and whether that creature, who seemed to him only fit to be classed with the divinities, was really a menial in the house of this weaver's son.

"Your father," resumed the Grand-Master, "writes with a plainness that pleases me. I thank him. It shall not be my fault, if every window in my sovereign's palace is not curtained with the silks from his looms; and, if it were not that my



son's espousals have drained my purse, I would give you the order on the instant for the re-furnishing of my hôtel. But another season will come, and then we shall be in heart again. Your father does not write in courtly vein. He says, that, amid his quiet and obedient subjects, who toil and spin for him while he sleeps, he envies not my uncertain influence over a maniac monarch, and dominion over factious nobles. Uncertain,—St. Peter! What think ye, De Roucy? May not a man who has allied one daughter to your noble house, another to the Sire de Montbaron, and another to Melun, and now has affianced his only son to the Constable d'Albret, doubly cousin to the King, may not he throw his glove in dame Fortune's face?"

"Yes, my lord, and dame Fortune may throw it back again. He only betrays his weakness, who props himself on every side."

"Weakness! I have not an enemy save Burgundy."

"And he who has Burgundy needs none other."

"You are billious this morning, De Roucy. But come, wherewith shall we entertain our young friend? We have no pictures, no statues. Our gardens are a wilderness, Montano, to your Paradise of Italy; but I have one piece of workmanship, that I think would even startle the masters of your land." He called the servant in waiting, and whispered an order to him. In a few moments the door re-opened, and a young girl appeared, bearing a silver basket of grapes. Her hair was golden, and, parted in front and confined on her temples with a silver thread, fell over her shoulders, a mass of curls. Her head was gracefully bent over the basket she carried, showing, in its most beautiful position, a swan-like neck. Her features were all symmetrical, and her mouth had that perfection of outline, that art can imitate, and that flexibility, obedient to



every motion of the soul, in which Nature is inimitable. Her dress was of rich materials, cut in the form prescribed to her rank. The mistresses were fond of illustrating their own generosity, or outdoing their rivals, by the rich liveries of their train, while they jealously maintained every badge of the gradation of rank. Her dress was much in the fashion of a Swiss peasant girl of the present times. Her petticoat, of a fine light-blue cloth, was full and short, exposing a foot and ankle, that a queen might have envied her the power to show, and which she, however, modestly sheltered, with the rich silver fringe that bordered her skirt. Her white silk boddice was laced with a silver cord, and her short, full sleeves were looped with cords and tassels of the same material. "Can ye match this girl in Italy?" whispered the old man to Montano.

"In Italy! nay, my lord, not in the world is there such another model of perfection!" replied Montano, who, changed as she was, by doffing her demi-cavalier dress, had, at a glance, recognized his acquaintance of the morning.

"Thank you! Violette," said Montagu, "are these grapes from your own bower?"

"They are, my lord."

"Then they must needs be sweeter than old Roland's, for they have been ripened by your bright eyes and sunny smiles."

"Ah, but grandfather," interposed little Pierre, "Violette did not say that, when I asked her for her grapes. She said, they would only taste good to her father, for whom she reared them, and that I should love Roland's better."

"And why did you not thus answer me, Violette?"

"You asked for them, my lord,—the master's request is law to the servant."

"God forgive me, if I be such a master! Take away the grapes, Violette, and send them, with what else ye will from



the refectory, to the forester. Nay, no thanks, my pretty child, or, if you will, for all thanks let me kiss your cheek." Violette stooped and offered her beautiful cheek, suffused with blushes, to Montagu's lips.

"The old have marvellous privileges!" muttered De Roucy. The same thought was expressed in Montano's glance, when his eye, as Violette turned, encountered hers. She involuntarily curtsied, as she recognized the gallant of the court. "A very suitable greeting for a stranger, Violette," said the Grand-Master; "but this youth must have a kinder welcome from my household. It is Felice Montano,—my friend's son,—give him a fitting welcome, my child."

"Nobles and princes," she replied, in a voice that set her words to music, "have welcomes for *your* friends, my lord; but such as a poor rustic can offer, she gives with all her heart." She took from her basket of grapes a half-blown rose. "Will ye take this, Signor?" she said, "it offers ye Nature's sweet welcome."

Montano kissed the rose, and placed it in his bosom, as devoutly as if it had dropped from the hand of his patron saint. He then opened the small sack which his attendant had brought to the hôtel, and which, at his request, had been laid on a side-table. It contained specimens of the most beautiful silks manufactured in his father's filature in Lombardy, unrivalled in Italy. While these were spread out and displayed, to the admiration of the Grand-Master, he took from among them, a *white silk scarf*, embroidered in silver with lilies of the valley, and, throwing it over Violette's shoulders, he asked, if she "would grace and reward their arts of industry by wearing it?"

"If it were fitting, Signor, one to whom it is prescribed



what bravery to wear, and how to wear it," she replied, looking timidly and doubtfully at the Grand-Master.

"It is *not* fitting," interposed De Roucy.

"And pray ye, Sir, why not?" asked Montagu; "we do not here allow, that gauds are for those alone who are born to them;—beneath our roof-tree, the winner is the wearer;—keep it, my pretty Violette, it well becomes thee." Violette dropped on her knee, kissed the Grand-Master's hand, and casting a look at Montano, worth, in his estimation, all the words of thanks in the French language, she disappeared.

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Montagu insisted, that during the time his young friend's negotiations with the silk venders of Paris detained him there, he should remain an inmate of his family; and nothing loath was Montano to accept a hospitality, which afforded him facilities for every day seeing Violette. His affairs were protracted; day after day he found some plausible pretext, if pretext he had needed, for delaying his departure; but, by his intelligence, his various information, and his engaging qualities, he had made such rapid advances in Montagu's favour, that he rather wanted potent reasons to reconcile him to their parting. If such had been the progress of their friendship, we need not be surprised, that one little month sufficed to mature a more tender sentiment, a sentiment, that, in the young bosoms of southern climes, ripens and perfects itself with the rapidity of the delicious fruits of a tropical sun. Daily and almost hourly, Violette and Montano were together in bower and hall. Set aside by their rank from an equal association with the visitors of the Grand-Master, they enjoyed a com-



plete immunity from any open interference with their happiness ; but Violette was persecuted with secret gallantries from De Roucy, that had become more abhorrent to her since her affections were consecrated to Montano. At the end of the month, their love was confessed and plighted ;—the Grand-Master had given his assent to their affiancing, and the Countess de Roucy had yielded hers, glad to be relieved from a favourite, whom she had begun to fear as a rival. The eighth of October was appointed for their nuptials. “ To-morrow morning, Violette,” said Montagu to her on the evening of the sixth, “ ye shall go and ask your father’s leave and blessing, and bid him to the wedding. Tell him,” he added, casting a side-glance towards De Roucy, who stood at a little distance, eyeing the young pair “ with jealous leer malign,” “ that I shall envy him his son-in-law ;—nay, tell him not that, I will not envy any man aught ; my course has been one of prosperity and possession,—I have numbered threescore and fifteen years,—I am now in sight of the farther shore of life, and no man can interrupt my peaceful passage to it !”

“ Let no man count on that from which one hour of life divides him !” cried De Roucy, starting from his fixed posture, and striding up and down the saloon. His words afterwards recurred to all that then heard him, as a prophecy.

Montano asked, for his morning’s ride, an escort of six armed men. “ I have travelled,” he said to the Grand-Master, “ over your kingdom with no defence but my own good weapon, and with gold enough to tempt some even of your haughty lords to violence ; till now, I never felt fear, or used caution.”

“ Because till now,” replied Montagu, “ your heart was not bound up in the treasure you exposed. That spirit is not human, that is not susceptible of fear.”



The escort was kindly provided, and, by Montagu's order furnished with baskets of fruit, wine, &c., to aid the extempore hospitalities of Violette's cottage-home. Before the sun had nearly reached the meridian, she was within sight of that dear home, on the borders of the Seine; and her eyes filled with tears, as, pointing out to Montano each familiar object, she thought how soon she was to be far separated from these haunts of her childhood. It was a scene of sylvan beauty and rustic abundance. Stacks of corn and hay, protected from the weather, not only witnessed the productiveness of the well-cultured farm, but seemed to enjoy the security, with which they were permitted to lie on the lap of their mother earth,—a rare security in those times of rapine, when the lazy nobles might, at pleasure and with impunity, snatch from the laborers the fruit of their toil. The cows were chewing the cud under the few trees of their sunny pasture, the sheep feeding on the hill-side, the domestic birds gossiping in the poultry-yard, and the oxen turning up, for the next summer's harvest, the rich soil of fields whose product the proprietor might hope to reap, as he enjoyed, through the favour of the Grand-Master, the benefit of the act called an *exemption de prise*. Barante, Violette's father, was lying on an oaken settle, that stood under an old pear-tree, laden with fruit, at his door. Two boys, in the perfection of boyhood, were eating their lunch and gambling on the grass with a little sturdy house-dog; while an old, blind grandmother sat within the door; she was the first to catch the sound of the trampling of the horses' hoofs. "Look, Henri, who is coming," she said. The dog and the boys started forth from the little court, and directly there was a welcoming bark, and shouts of, "It's Violette! it's our dear sister!" Amidst



this shouting and noisy joy, Violette made her way to her father's arms, and the fond embrace of the old woman.

"And whom shall I bid welcome, Violette?" asked Barante, offering his hand to Montano.

"Signor Felice Montano," answered Violette, her eyes cast down, and her cheek burning, as if, by pronouncing the name, she told all she had to tell.

"Welcome here, Sir," resumed Barante; "ye have come, doubtless, to see how poor folk live?" and the good man looked round on his little domain with a very proud humility.

"Oh no, dear father; he came not for that."

"What did he come for, then, sister?" asked little Hugh.

"I came not to see how *you* live," said Montano, "but to beg from you wherewith to live myself," and, taking Barante aside, he unfolded his errand.

"Come close to grandmother, Violette," said Henri, "and let her feel your russet gown. I am glad you come not home in your bravery, for then you would not seem like our own sister."

"And yet," said the old woman, with a little of that womanish feeling, that clings to the sex, of all conditions and ages, "I think none would become it better;—but, dear me, Lettie, how you've grown! I can hardly reach to the top of your head."

"Not a hair's breadth have I grown, grandmother, since I saw you last; but now do I seem more natural?" and she knelt down before the old woman.

"Yes,—yes,—now you are my own little Lettie again,—your head just above my knee. How time flies! it seems but yesterday, when your mother was no higher than this, and it's five years, come next All-Saints-Day, since we laid her in the cold earth. But why have you bound up your pretty curls in



this net-work, Lettie?" Henri playfully snatched the silver net from her head, and her golden curls fell over her shoulders. The old woman stroked, and fondly kissed them, and then passed her shrivelled fingers over Violette's face, seeming to measure each feature. "Oh, if I could but once more see those eyes,—I remember so well their colour,—just like the violet that is dyed deepest with the sunbeams,—and that was why we call you Violette; but, when they turned from the light, and glanced up through your long, dark eyelashes, they looked black; so many a foolish one disputed with me the colour, as if I should not know, that had watched them by all lights, since they first opened on this world."

"Dear grandmother, I am kneeling for your blessing, and you are filling my head with foolish thoughts."

"And there is another, who would fain have your blessing, good mother," said Montano, whose hand Barante had just joined to Violette's.

"What?—a stranger!—who is this?"

"One, good mother, who craves a boon, which if granted, he desires nought else; if denied, all else would be bootless to him."

"What means he, Violette?"

"Nothing,—and yet much, grandmother," replied Violette, with a smile and a blush, that would, could the old woman have seen them, have interrupted Montano's words.

"Ah, a young spark!" she said. "It is ever so with them,—their cup foameth and sparkleth, and yet there is nothing in it."

"But there is much in it this time," interposed Barante; and, a little impatient of the periphrasing style of the young people, he proceeded to state, in direct terms, the character and purpose of his visitor, and said, in conclusion, "I have



given my consent and blessing ; for you know, mother, we can't keep our Lettie,—we bring up our children for others, not for ourselves, and, when their time comes, they will, for it's God's law, leave their father's house and cleave unto a stranger."

" But why, dear Lettie," asked the old woman, " do ye not wed among your own people ? why go among barbarians ?"

" Barbarians ! dear grandmother,—if ye knew all that I have learned of his people, from Felice Montano, ye would think we were the barbarians, instead of they. Why, grandmother, Felice can both read and write like any priest, while our great lords can only make their mark. And so much do these Italians know of what the learned call the *arts* and *sciences* (I know not the meaning of the words, but Felice has promised to explain them to me, when we can talk of such things), that our people call them *sorcerers*."

" Ah, well-a-day ! I thought how it would be, when the Lady Elinor took such a fancy to your bonnie face, and begged you away from us. But why cannot ye content yourself at the Grand-Master's ?"

" Oh, ask me not to stay there. He is as kind as my father, and so is the Lady Elinor ; but," added Violette in a whisper, " her husband is a bold, bad man ; he hath said to me what it maketh me blush to recall."

" Why need ye fear him, Violette ?"

" Why fear him, grandmother ! If all be true that men whisper of him, he dares do whate'er the Evil One bids him. They say he was at the bottom of the horrid affair at the Hôtel de St. Paul, and that, at Mans, he it was, that directed the mad King against the Chevalier de Polignac."\*

\* The two passages, here referred to, so well illustrate the character of



"But surely, dear child, the Grand-Master can protect ye."

the times, that I am induced to translate them from Sismondi's *History of the French*.

"Among these festivals, there was one which terminated sadly. A widow, maid of honour to the Queen, was married a second time, to a certain Chevalier du Vermandois. The King ordered the nuptials to be celebrated at the palace. The nuptials of widows were occasions of extreme licentiousness. Words and actions were permitted, which elsewhere would have called forth blushes, at a time when blushes were rare. The King, wishing to avail himself of the occasion, assumed, with five of his young courtiers, the disguise of a Satyr. Tunics besmeared with tar, and covered with tow, gave them, from head to foot, a hairy appearance. In this costume, they entered the festive hall, dancing. No one recognised them. While the five surrounded the bride, and embarrassed her with their dances, Charles left them to torment his aunt, the Duchess of Berri, who, though married to an old man, was the youngest of the princesses. She could not even conjecture who he was. In the mean time, the Duke of Orleans approached the others, with a torch in his hand, as if to reconnoitre their faces, and set fire to the tow. It was but a sally of mad sport on his part, though he was afterwards reproached with it, as if it were an attempt on his brother's life. The King discovered himself to the Duchess of Berri, who covered him with her mantle, and conducted him out of the hall." Four of the five perished.

The historian, after saying that Charles, conducting his army into Brittany, left Mans one very hot day, and that, while riding over a sandy plain, under a vertical sun, and excited by a trifling accident and some random words of his fool, he became suddenly mad, proceeds; "He drew his sword, and putting his horse to his speed, and crying, 'On, on! Down with the traitors!' he fell upon the pages and knights nearest to him. No one dared defend himself otherwise than by flight, and, in this access of fury, he successively killed the bastard De Polignac, and three other men. At first the pages believed they had committed some disorder, which had enraged him; but, when he attacked the Duke of Orleans, his brother, they perceived he had lost his reason." The historian proceeds to say, that, not daring to control him, they agreed upon the expedient of letting him pursue them till he was exhausted; but finally a Norman knight, much loved by the King, ventured to spring up behind him and pinion his arms.



“Now he can,—but we know not how long his power may last. They say that he is far out of favour with Burgundy, and none standeth long, on whom he frowneth. Indeed, indeed, dear grandmother, it is better your child should go away, to a safe shelter.”

“Ye have given me many reasons; but that ye love, is always enough for you young ones. Well,—God speed ye,—ye must have your day; kneel down, both, and take an old woman’s blessing,—it may do ye good, under good conduct—it can do ye no harm!”

This ceremony over, the boys, who had heard they were bidden to the wedding, and who thought not of the parting, nor any thing beyond it, were clamorous in their expressions of joy. Their father sent them, with some refection, to the men, who, at his bidding, had conducted their horses to a little paddock in the rear of his cottage, where they were refreshing them from his stores of provender.

The day was passing happily away. Never had Violette appeared so lovely in Montano’s eyes, as in the atmosphere of home, where every look and action was tinged by a holy light that radiated from the heart. Time passed as he always does when he “only treads on flowers,” and the declining sun admonished them to prepare for their departure. “But first,” said Barante, “let us taste together our dear patron’s bounty. Unpack that hamper, boys, and you, dear Violette, serve us as you were wont.” Violette donned her little home-apron of white muslin, tied with sarsnet bows, and, spreading a cloth on the ground under the pear-tree, she and the boys arranged the wine, fruit, and various confections from the basket. “It’s all sugar, Hugh!” said Henri, touching his tongue to the tip of a bird’s wing. “And this is sugar, too,!” replied Hugh, testing in the same mode a bunch of mimic cherries. The



French *artistes* already excelled all others in every department of the confectionary art, and to our little rustics their work seemed miraculous. "Hark ye, Hugh!" said his brother; "I believe St. Francis dropped these from his pocket, as he flew over."

"Come, loiterers!" cried his father, "while you are gazing, we would be eating. Ah, that is right, Signor Montano! Is it the *last* time, my pretty Violette?" to Violette and Montano, who were leading the old woman from her chair to the oaken settle. "Come, sit by me, my child. Now we are all seated, we will fill the cup, and drink 'Many happy years to Jean de Montagu!'"

As if to mark the futility of the wish, the progress of the cup to the lip was interrupted by an ominous sound; and forth from the thick barrier of shrubbery, that fenced the northern side of the cottage, came twelve men, armed and masked.

"De Roucy! God help us!" shrieked Violette.

"Seize her instantly, and off with her, as I bade ye!" cried a voice, that Montano recognised as the Count de Roucy's.

"Touch her at your peril, villain!" cried Montano, drawing his sword and shouting for his attendants. Montano and Barante, the latter armed only with a club, kept their assailants at bay till his men appeared, and they, inspired by their master's example and adjurations, fought valiantly! but one, and then another of their number fell, and the ruffians were two to one against Violette's defenders. The rampart they had formed around her was diminishing. "Courage, my boys, courage!" cried Barante, as he shot a glance at his children, crouching round his old mother, motionless as panic-



struck birds. "Courage! God and the Saints are on our side!"

"Beat them back, my men!" shouted Montano. Jean de Montagu will reward ye!"

"Jean de Montagu!" retorted De Roucy, "his bones are cracking on the rack! Ah! I'm wounded!—'tis but a scratch!—seize her, Le Croy!—press on, my men!—the prize is ours!" But they, seeing their leader fall back, for an instant faltered.

A thought, as if from Heaven, inspired Montano. De Roucy, to avoid giving warning of his approach, had left his horses on the outer side of the wood. Montano's attendants had, just before the onset of De Roucy's party, saddled their master's horse, and led him to the gate of the court; there he was now standing, and the passage from Violette to him unobstructed. Once on him and started, thought Montano, she may escape. "Mount my horse, Violette," he cried, "fear nothing,—we will keep them back,—Heaven guard you!" Violette shot from the circle, like an arrow loosed from the bow, unfastened the horse, and sprang upon him. He had been chafing and stamping, excited by the din of arms, and impatient of his position; and, as she leaped into the saddle, he sprang forward, swift as an arrow from the Tartar's bow. Violette heard the yell of the ruffians mingling with the victorious shouts of her defenders. Once her eye caught the flash of their arms; but whether they were retreating or still stationary, she knew not. She had no distinct perception, no consciousness, but an intense desire to get on faster than even her flying steed conveyed her. There were few persons on the road, though passing through the immediate vicinity of a great city. Many of those, who cultivated the environs of Paris, had their dwellings, for greater security,



within the walls ; and, their working-day being over, they had already retired within them.\*

From a *hostelrie*, where a party of cavaliers were reveling, there were opposing shouts of "Stop !" and "God speed ye !" and, of the straggling peasants returning from market, some crossed themselves, fancying this aerial figure, with colourless face and golden hair streaming to the breeze, was some demon in angelic form ; and others knelt and murmured a prayer, believing it was indeed an angel. She had just made a turn in the road, which brought her within sight of Notre Dame and the gates of Paris, when she heard the trampling of horses coming rapidly on behind her. Her horse too heard the sound, and, as if conscious of his sacred trust and duty, redoubled his speed. The sounds approached nearer and nearer, and now were lost in the triumphing shouts of her pursuers. Violette's head became giddy ; a sickening despair quivered through her frame. "We have her now !" cried the foremost, and stretched his hand to grasp her rein. The action gave a fresh impulse to her horse. He was within a few yards of the barriers. He sprang forward, and in an instant was within the gates. "We are balked !" cried the leader of the pursuit, reining in his horse ; and pouring out a volley of oaths, he ordered his men to retreat, saying, it was more than the head of a follower of De Roucy was worth, to venture within the barriers. As the sounds of the retiring party died away, Violette's horse slackened his speed, and was arrested by the captain of the guard, who had just begun

\* "In despotic countries, rights are only respected inasmuch as they are sustained by power. The inhabitants of towns, even the poorest, had a certain degree of force. Their title, *bourgeois*, in the German, whence it is derived, means *confederates*, a reciprocal responsibility."—*Etudes de l'Economie Politique*, par Sismondi.



the patrol for the night. To his questions Violette replied not a word. Her consciousness was gone, and exhausted and fainting, she slid from the saddle into his arms. Fortunately he was a humane man; he was touched with her youthful and lovely face; and, not knowing to what other place of shelter and security to convey her, he procured a litter, and carried her to his own humble home, where he consigned her to the care of his good wife Susanne. There being then little provision for the security of private property and individual rights, Montano's horse was classed among those *strays*, that, in default of an owner, escheated to the King, and was sent, by the guard, to the King's stables; and thus all clue to Montano was lost.

As soon as Violette recovered her consciousness, her first desire was to get news of those whom she had left in extremest peril; and, as the readiest means of effecting this, she entreated the compassionate woman, who was watching at her bedside, to send her to the Grand-Master.

"The Grand-Master!" replied the good dame; "Mary defend us! what would ye with him?"

Violette, in feeble accents, explained her relations with him, and her hope, through him, to obtain news of her friends. Susanne answered her with mysterious intimations, which implied, not only that he, whom she deemed her powerful protector, could do nothing for her, but that it was not even safe to mention his name; and then after promising her that a messenger should be despatched, in the morning, to her father's cottage, she administered the common admonitions and consolations, that seem so very wise and sufficient to the bestower,—are so futile to the receiver. "She must hope for the best;"—"she must cast aside her cares;"—"sleep would tranquillize her;"—"brighter hours might come with the



morning; but if they came not, she might live to see what seemed worst now, to be best, and, at any rate, grieving would not help her."

Thus it has been from the time of Job's comforters to the present; words have been spoken to the wretched, as impotent as the effort of the child, who stretching his arm against a torrent, expects to hold it back! But, to do Dame Susanne justice, she acted as well as spoke; and the next morning a messenger was sent, and returned in due time with news, which no art could soften to Violette. Her father's cottage was burned to the ground, and all about it laid waste. Some peasants reported that they had seen the flames during the night, and men, armed and mounted, conveying off whatever was portable, and driving before them Barante's live stock. What had become of the poor man, his children, and old mother, no one knew; but there were certain relics among the ashes, which too surely indicated they had not all escaped. Poor Violette had strength neither of body nor mind left, to sustain her under such intelligence. She was thrown into a delirious fever, during which she raved continually about her murdered family and Montano, who was never absent from her thoughts. But, whatever an individual sufferer might feel, such scenes of marauding and violence were too common to excite surprise. "Barante," it was said, "had but met at last the fate of all those, who were fools enough to labor and heap up riches, for the idle and powerful to covet and enjoy."

This feeling was natural and just in the labouring classes, when the valets of princes were legalized robbers, and were permitted, whenever their masters' idle followers were to be accommodated, not only to slay the working man's bees, and appropriate the produce of his fields, but to enter his house and sweep off the blankets that covered him, and the



pillows on which his children were sleeping. Those, who fancy the world has made no moral progress, should read carefully the history of past ages, and compare the condition of the labourers then, like so many defenceless sheep on the borders of a forest filled with beasts of prey, to the security and independence of our working sovereigns. They would find, that the jurisdiction of that celebrated judge, who unites in his own person the threefold power of judge, jury, and executioner, was then exercised by the armed and powerful; that it was universal and unquestioned; whereas now, if he ventures his summary application of *Lynch law*, his abuses are bruited from Maine to Georgia, and men shake their heads and sigh over the deterioration of the world, and the licentiousness of liberty!

On the ninth day of her illness, while Susanne was standing by Violette, she awoke from her first long sleep. Her countenance was changed, her flaming colour was gone, and her eye was quiet. She feebly raised her head, and, bursting into tears, said, "Oh, why did you not wake me sooner?"

"Why should I wake you, dear?"

"Why! do you not hear that dreadful bell?" The great bell of Notre Dame was tolling. "They will be buried,—the boys and all,—all,—before I get there!"

"*Dieu-merci*, child, your people are not going to the burial;—that bell tolls not for such as yours and mine. We are thrown into the earth, and Notre Dame wags not her proud tongue for us."

"Ah, true,—true." She pressed her hand on her head, as if collecting her thoughts; and then, looking up timidly and shrinking from the answer, she said, "Ye've heard nothing of them?"

"Nothing as yet; but you are better, and that's a token



of more good to follow. Now rest again. It is a noisy day. All the world is abroad. It's the nobles' concern, not ours, so I pray ye sleep again, and, whatever ye hear, lift not your head; there be throngs of bad men in the street, and where such are, there may be ugly sights. I will go below, and keep what quiet I can for ye."

Susanne's dwelling was old and rickety. The apartment under that which Violette occupied, was a little shop, where Dame Susanne vended cakes, candies, and common toys. Violette could hear every sentence spoken there in an ordinary tone; but, owing to Susanne's well-meant efforts, her ear caught only imperfect sentences, such as follow.

"Good day, Mistress Susanne! will you lend me a look-out from your window to see the ——"

"Hush!"

"They're coming, mother! they're coming!"

"Hush!"

"There are Burgundy's men first; ye'll know them, boy, by the cross of St. Andrew on their bonnets; and there are the Armagnacs,—see their scarfs!"

"Speak lower, please neighbour!"

"It's well for them they have provided against a rescue;—the *bourgeois* are all for him,—every poor man's heart is for him; for why? he was for every poor man's right; God reward him."

"Pray speak a little lower, neighbour."

"But is it not a shame, Dame Susanne? But ten days ago and all, save Burgundy, were his friends, and now——"

"There he is mother! see! see!"

"They stop! oh, mother, see him show his broken joints! Mother! mother! how his head hangs on one side! Curse on the rack, that cracked his bones asunder!"



“Hush! I bid ye hush!”

“Who can that goodly youth be, that stands close by his side? See, he is speaking to him!”

“Oh, he looks like an angel,—so full of pity, mother!

“By St. Dominic, neighbour, the boy is right!”

“Oh, mother, what eyes he has;—now he is looking up,—see!”

“Hush!”

“But look at them, Dame Susanne,—would ye not think the lamp of his soul was shining through them?”

“See him kiss the poor, broken hand, that hangs down so! God bless him! there’s true courage in that; and see those same lips, how they curl in scorn, as he turns towards those fierce wretches! He is some stranger-youth. Whence is he, think ye, Susanne?”

“I think by the cut of his neckcloth, and the fashion of his head-gear,” replied Susanne, who for a moment forgot her caution, “he comes from *Italy*.”

The words were talismanic to Violette. She sprang from her bed to the window, and the first object she saw amid a crowd was Montano; the second, her protector and friend, Jean de Montagu, the Grand-Master. He was stretched on a hurdle, for the torments of the rack had left him unable to sustain an upright position. Violette’s eye was riveted to the mutilated form of her good old master. Her soul seemed resolved into one deep supplication; but not one word expressed its intense emotions, so far did they “transcend the imperfect offices of prayer.” Not one treacherous glance wandered to her lover, till the procession moved; and then the thought, that she was losing her last opportunity of being reunited to him, turned the current of feeling, and suggested an expedient, which she immediately put into execution.



She had taken her white scarf, in her pocket, to the cottage, to show it to her father; and through her delirium she had persisted in keeping it by her. She now hung it in the window, in the hope, that, fluttering in the breeze, it might attract Montano's eye. She watched him, but his attention was too fixed to be diverted by any thing, certainly not by a device so girlish. The procession moved on. The hurdle, and the stately figure beside it, were passing from her view. She threw the casement open, and leaned out. The scaffold, erected at the end of the street, struck her sight. She shrieked, fainted, and fell upon the floor. That one moment gave the colour to her after-life. She had been seen, and marked,—and was remembered.

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The Duke of Burgundy had taken advantage of a moment, when Charles was but partially recovered from a fit of insanity, to compass the Grand-Master's ruin. The nobles had wept at Montagu's execution, but they had been consoled by the rich spoils of his estate. There was no such balm for the sovereign; and it became a matter of policy to get up some dramatic novelty to divert his mind, and prevent a recurrence to the past, which might prove dangerous, even to Burgundy. Accordingly, a new *mystery* was put in train for presentation, and one month after the last act of Montagu's tragedy, and while his dishonoured body was still attached to the gibbet of Montfauçon, the gay world of Paris assembled, to witness the representation of a legend of a certain saint, called "The Espousals of St. Thérèse."

The seat over which the regal canopy was suspended, corresponded to our stage-box, and afforded an access to the



stage, that royalty might use at pleasure. The King was surrounded by his own family. His wandering eye, his vacant laugh, and incessant talking, betrayed the still disordered state of his mind; for when sane, amidst a total destitution of talents and virtues, he had a certain affability of manner, and the polish of conventional life, which, as his historian says, acquired for him the "ridiculous title of '*well-beloved*.'"

On Charles's right sat his Queen, Isabel of Bavaria, a woman remarkable for nothing but excessive obesity, the gluttony that produced it, and the indolence consequent upon it,—and one passion, avarice. But she was a branch of transmitted royalty—and ruled by *divine right*! (And sovereigns, such as these, are, in some men's estimation, *rulers*.) Behind the Queen, a place was left vacant for the Duke of Orleans who, in consequence of a marvellous escape from death during a thunder-storm, when his horses had plunged into the Seine, had vowed to pay his creditors, and had, on that very day, bidden them to dinner, at which he had promised the dessert should be a satisfaction of their debts. "So soon from your dinner, my lord?" said his Duchess to him as he entered, with an expression of face, which indicated a fear that all had not gone as she wished.

"Yes. A short horse is soon curried."

"What? Came they not? Surely of the eight hundred bidden, there were many who would not do you such discredit, as to believe your virtue exhaled with the shower?"

"Ah, their faith was sufficient,—they came, every mother's son of them, butchers, bakers, fruiterers, and all."

"And you sent them away happy?"

"Yes, with one of the beatitudes;—blessed are those who have nothing! I charged my valets to turn them back



from my gate, and to tell them, if they came again, they should be beaten off!"

There was a general laugh through the box. The Duchess of Orleans alone turned away with an expression of deep mortification. Valentine Visconti, daughter of the Duke of Milan and Duchess of Orleans, was one of the most celebrated women of her time. Her graceful beauty seemed the impersonation of her lovely land—something quite foreign to the French court. As she sat by the gross queen, she inspired the idea of what humanity might become, when invested with the "glorified body" of the Saints. Her soul beamed with almost preternatural lustre from her eyes, and spoke in the musical accents of her beautiful lips. Her gentleness and sympathy, more than the intellectual power and accomplishments, that signalized her amidst a brutified and ignorant race, gave her an ascendancy over the mad King, which afforded some colour to the wicked imaginations of those who, in the end, accused her of sorcery!—an accusation very common against the Italians of that period, whose superior civilization and science were attributed to the diabolical arts of magic. The secret of Valentine's power over the maniac King has been discovered and illustrated by modern benevolence. She could lead him like a little child, when, for months, he would not consent to be washed or dressed, and when these offices were performed at night by ten men, masked, lest, when their sovereign recovered all the reason he ever possessed, he should cause them to be hung for this act of necessary violence!

The spectators, while awaiting the rising of the curtain, were exchanging the usual observations and salutations. "Valentine," whispered the beautiful young wife of the old Duke of Berri, "did not that man,—*mon Dieu*, how beautiful he is!—who stands near the musicians, kiss his hand to you?"



“Yes,—he is my countryman.”

“I thought so ;—he looks as if the blood of all your proud old nobles ran in his veins ;—the Confalonieris, Sforzas, Viscontis, and Heaven knows who.”

“He has a loftier nobility than theirs, my cousin ; his charter is direct from Heaven, and written by the finger of Heaven on his noble countenance. As to this world’s honours, he boasts none but such as the son of a rich and skilful weaver of silks may claim.”

“*Mon Dieu !* is it possible ; he is a counterfeit, that well might pass in any King’s exchequer. But he looks sad and abstracted, and, seeing, seemeth as though he saw not. Know ye, cousin, what aileth him ?”

“Yes, but it is a long tale ; the lady of his thoughts has strangely disappeared, and, though for more than a month he has sought her, day and night, he hath, as yet, no trace of her. He has come hither to-night at my bidding, for I deeply pity the poor youth, and would fain divert his mind ;—but soft,—the curtain is rising !”

“Pray tell me what means this scene, Valentine ?”

“It is the interior of a chapel. You know this legend of St. Thérèse ?”

“Indeed I do not. I cannot read, and my confessor never told it to me.”

“She was betrothed to one she loved. The preparations were made for the espousals, when, on the night before her marriage, she saw, in vision, St. Francis, who bade her renounce her lover, and told her, that she was the elected bride of Heaven ; that she must repair to the convent of the Sisters of Charity, and there resign the world, and abjure its sinful passions. You now see her obedient to the miraculous visitation. She has concluded her novitiate. One weakness she



has as yet indulged. She has secretly retained the last gift of her betrothed. Hark! there you hear the vesper-bell. She is coming to deposit it at that shrine, yonder."

A female now entered, closely veiled and clad in a full, gray stuff dress, that concealed every line of her person. She held something in her hands, which were folded on her bosom, and walking, with faltering steps, across the stage to the shrine, knelt and made the accustomed signs and prayer. She then rose, and raising the little roll to her lips, kissed it fervently, and then, as if asking pardon for this involuntary weakness, again dropped on her kness, and depositing the roll, withdrew. It would seem, she had entered completely into the tender regrets of the young saint she impersonated, for a tear she had dropped on the last bequest of the lover was seen, as it caught and reflected the lamp's rays. Immediately, through an open window in the ceiling, a dove entered, the symbol of the Holy Spirit. It was not uncommon, in these mysteries, to bring the sacred persons of the Trinity upon the scene. The bird descended, and took the roll in his bill. As he rose with it, it unfolded, and the *white silk scarf*, given to poor Violette, represented the last earthly treasure of Saint Thérèse. The dove made three evolutions in his ascent, and disappeared. While the cries of "*Bravo! Bravissimo! Petit oiseau! Jolie colombe!*" were resounding through the house, the Duchess de Berri whispered to Valentine, "See your compatriot! he looks as if he would spring upon the stage! how deadly pale! and his eyes! blessed Mary! they are like living fires! Surely he is going mad!"

"Heaven help him!" replied the gentle Valentine. "I erred in counselling him to come hither! Would I could speak with him."



“Never mind him now, cousin; the scene is changing;—tell me, what comes next?”

“Next you will see St. Thérèse praying before her crucifix,—ah, there she is! there is the coffin in which she sleeps at night,—there the death’s-head she contemplates all day.”

“Shocking! shocking! I never would be a nun.”

“It is but for the last days of her penitence. After her vows are made, she, like all her order, will be devoted to nursing the sick, and succouring the wretched,—a happier life than ours, my cousin!”

“Think ye so? Methinks the next world will be soon enough to be a saint, and do much tiresome good deeds. But why has she that ugly mantle drawn over her head, so that one cannot see her hair, or the form of her neck and shoulders?”

“Be not so impatient. You see the door behind her. The Devil is coming into her cell under the form of her lover. Ah, there he is!”

“Bless my heart, if I were the Devil, I would never leave that goodly form again. Now she’ll turn! now we shall see her face! Pshaw! she has pulled that ugly mantle over, for a veil.”

“Pray be still, cousin;—this is her last temptation. I would not lose a word. Listen,—hear how she resists the prince of darkness.”

The pretended lover performed his part so as to do honour to the supernatural power he represented. At first, he would have embraced the saint; but she shrunk from him, and, reverently placing her hand on the crucifix, stood statue-like against the wall. He then knelt and poured out his passion vehemently. He reminded her of their early



love,—of the home, where he had wooed and won her; he besought her to speak to him,—once to withdraw her veil, and look at him. She was still silent and immovable. He described the wearisome and frigid existence of a conventual life, and then painted, in passionate words, the happiness that awaited him, if she would but keep her first vow, made to him. He told her, that horses awaited them at the outward gate. The force of the temptation now became apparent. The weak, loving girl, was triumphing over the saint. Her head dropped on her bosom, her whole frame trembled, and was sinking. Her lover saw his triumph and sprang forward to seize her. But her virtue was re-nerved; she grasped the crucifix, and looking up to a picture of the Virgin, shrieked, “Mary, blessed mother! aid me!”

The Evil One extended his arm to wrest the crucifix, when, smitten by its holy virtue, he sunk through the floor, enveloped in flames. The saint again fell on her knees, the dove again descended and fluttered around her, and the curtain fell.

In those days, when conventual life had lost nothing of its sacredness, and men’s minds were still subjected to a belief in the visible interference of good and evil spirits in men’s concerns, such a scene was most effective. The spectators were awed; not a sound was heard, till the Duchess of Berri, never long abstracted from the actual world, whispered, “Valentine, did you see your Italian when she shrieked; how he struck his hand upon his head! and see him now, what a colour in his cheek! He will certainly go mad, and, knowing you, he may dart hither before we can avoid him. Will ye not ask Orleans to order those men at arms to conduct him out?—you know,” in a whisper, “I have such a horror of madmen.”

“You need have none, believe me, in this case. My poor



countryman is suffering from watching and exhaustion, and his imagination is easily excited. The next scene will calm him. The saint, victorious over the most importunate of mortal passions, will resolutely make her vows, and receive the veil."

"Oh, then we shall see her face, after all?"

"Yes, and with all the factitious charm that dress and ornament can lend it; for, to render her renunciation of the world more striking, she is to appear in a bridal dress, decked with the vanities that we women cling last to;—but hush! the curtain is rising!"

The curtain rose, and discovered the chapel of a convent. The nuns and their superior stood on one side, a priest and attendants on the other. A golden crucifix was placed in the centre, with a figure of the Saviour, as large as life. Before this, St. Thérèse was kneeling. Her dress was white silk, embroidered with pearls, with a full sleeve, looped to the shoulder with pearls. A few symbolical orange-buds drooped over her forehead, certainly not whiter than the brow on which they rested. Her hair was parted in front, and drawn up behind in a Grecian knot of rich curls, and fastened there with a diamond cross. She was pale as monumental marble; her eyes not raised to Heaven, but riveted to earth, as if she were still clinging to the parting friend. The priest advanced to cut off her hair, the last office previous to investing her with the gray gown and fatal veil. As he unfastened the diamond cross, her bright tresses fell over her neck and shoulders, and, reaching even to the ground, gave the finishing touch to her beauty, and called forth a general shout of "Beautiful! beautiful! most beautiful!"

Over every other voice, and soon stilling every other, was heard the King's, and, seized with an access of madness, he



rushed upon the stage clapping his hands and screaming, "She is mine! my bride! Out with ye, ugly nuns! She is mine! mine!" Each reiteration was followed by a maniac yell.

"Nay, she is mine! my own Violette! my betrothed wife!" interposed Montano, springing forward and encircling Violette with one arm, while he repelled Charles with the other.

A general rising followed. The stage was filled with the nobles, rushing forward to chastise the stranger who had presumed to lay his hands on sacred majesty. A hundred weapons were drawn, and pointed at Montano. There was a Babel confusion of sounds. At this crisis, Valentine penetrated into the midst of the *mêlée*, whispering, as she passed Montano, "Be quiet—be prudent—leave all to me."

The lords, who had more than once seen her power over the madness of their sovereign, fell back. She placed herself between the King and Montano, and putting her hand soothingly on Charles, she said, with a smile, "Methinks, my lord King, we are all beside ourselves with this bewitching show,—we know not who or what we are. Here is a churl hath dared to come between the King and his subject, and you, my sovereign," (in a whisper), "have strangely forgotten your Queen's presence. Unhand that maiden, sir stranger. Kneel, my child, to your gracious sovereign, and let him see you loyally hold yourself at his disposal." Violette mechanically obeyed.

"Nay, my pretty one, kneel not," said Charles, still wild, but no longer violent. "Ah, I had forgot! here are the bridal orange-buds. Come, come, you lazy priest,—come marry us!" Violette looked as if she would fain again take refuge in Montano's arms.

"To-morrow, my lord King, will surely be soon enough,"



whispered Valentine with a confidential air, and, pointing to Isabel, she added, "it would not seem well to have the rites performed in her presence!" The Queen, with characteristic nonchalance, had remained quietly in her place, where she seemed quite absorbed in devouring a bunch of delicious grapes.

"You are right, *dear sister*," replied the King,—thus, in his softened moods, he always addressed Valentine,—"it is not according to church rule to marry one wife in presence of another!" He then burst into a peal of idiotic laughter, which, after continuing for some moments, left him in a state of imbecility, so nearly approaching to unconsciousness, that he was conveyed to his palace without making the slightest resistance.

A general movement followed the King's departure, and cries rose, that the stranger must be manacled and conveyed to prison. The Duchess of Orleans interposed. "My lords," she said, "I pray ye give this youth into my charge. He is my countryman. I will be responsible for him to our gracious sovereign." There were murmurings of hesitation and discontent. "In sooth, my lords," added Valentine, "ye should not add an injustice to a stranger to our usages, to the error you have already committed this night, in bringing our royal master, but half recovered from his malady, into this heated atmosphere and exciting scene ;—it were well, if we can avoid it, to preserve no memorials of this night's imprudence." This last hint effected what an appeal to their justice had failed to obtain, and the lords permitted Montano unmolested to withdraw with the Duchess of Orleans.

Intent on making those happy, who *could* be happy, Valentine bade Montano and Violette attend her to her carriage. After weeping with joy on her lover's bosom, Violette's first



words were, "My father,—my brothers, Montano, can ye tell me aught of them?"

"They are safe,—safe and well, in all save their ignorance of you, dear Violette," replied Montano; "and by this time are they arrived in my happy country."

"Thank God!—and my dear old grandmother?"

"Nay, ask no farther to-night."

"Better it is, my good friend," said Valentine, "to satisfy her inquiry now, while her cup is full and sparkling with joy;—you can bear, my child, patiently a single bitter drop?"

"She was murdered, then?"

"She is at rest, my child,—you may weep,—we should weep for the good and kind."

Before the little party separated for the night, Violette explained, that in consequence of having been seen at the window on the day of Montagu's execution, she had been sought out by the managers of the mystery, and compelled, in the King's name, to obey their behests.

"And to-morrow," said Valentine, "ye shall obey mine. I, too, will be the manager of a mystery, and real espousals shall be enacted by Montano and Violette; then, ho! for my happy country."



# FANNY M<sup>C</sup>DERMOT.

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## CHAPTER I.

“Then said she, “I am very dreary,  
He will not come,” she said.  
She wept.—“I am aweary, aweary,  
Oh God, that I were dead !”

INVENTION need not be taxed for incidents fitted to touch the heart, nor need they be heightened with the dyes of romance. The daily life of our own cities abounds in events over which, if there be tears in heaven, surely the angels weep. It is not to draw tears, which flow too easily from susceptible young readers, that the following circumstances are related, but to set forth dangers to which many are exposed, and vices which steep the life God has given as a blessing, in dishonour, misery, and remorse.

A few years since, there lived on the east side of our city, where cheap and wretched residences abound, one Sara Hyat. Sara was a widow, not young, nor pretty, nor delicate, with none of the elements of romantic interest ; but old, tall, angular, and coarse, with a face roughened by hardship, sharpened by time, and channeled by sorrow. Her voice was harsh, and her



manner ungracious. There was one, and but one sign, and that a faint one, that she might once have partaken the weaknesses of her sex. She wore that hideous supplement to the hair which women call "a foretop," and not being very exact in the adjustment of her cap, the juxtaposition of the foxy auburn exotic and the indigenous silver hairs set off this little lingering of vanity rather strikingly.

But as all is not gold that glitters, and beauty is but skin deep, and under a rough shell is often found excellent meat ; so under Mrs. Hyat's rough exterior, there were strong common sense, a spirit of rectitude, a good conscience, and affections that the rough usage of the world had not abated. These had attached her with devotion and self-sacrifice to one object after another, as the relations of life had changed, first binding her in loving duty to her parents and sisters, then to her husband and children, and finally, when, one after another, they had dropped into the grave, settling on the only one in whose veins a drop of her blood ran, a little orphan grand-niece.

"A sweeter thing they could not light upon." Go with us up a crazy staircase, at the extremity of Houston Street. If you chance to look in at the door of the rooms you pass, you will see,—it being Sunday,—an entire Irish family, father, mother, half-a-dozen children, more or less, with a due allowance of cousins, all plump, rosy, and thriving (in the teeth of the physical laws) on plenty of heterogeneous food, and superfluity of dirt. On entering Mrs. Hyat's rooms, you are in another country ; the tenants are obviously Americans : it is so orderly, quiet, and cleanly, and rather anti-social. There are only an old woman and a little girl ; the bud of spring-time, and the seared leaf of autumn. The only dirt in the room (you almost wonder the old woman tolerates it there)



is in two flower-pots in the window, whence a white jessamine, and a tea-rose diffuse their sweet odours.

A table is decently spread for the mongrel meal that our people call supper, which blends the substantial food of dinner, with the aromatic tea, and its sweet accompaniments of pastry, cake, or preserves. The tea-kettle is hissing on the stove, and a pie is warming there. The old woman sits in her rocking-chair, weaving backwards and forwards, reading a time-discoloured letter, while a little girl (the only thing in harmony with the rose and jessamine in the window), laying aside a tract she is reading, says, "Aunt Sara, don't you know every word in that letter by heart? I do."

"Why, do you Fanny? Say it then."

"MY DEAR AUNT,

"I am clean discouraged. It seems as if Providence crowded on me. There is black disappointment, turn which way I will. I have had an offer to go to Orleans, and part pay beforehand, which same I send you herewith.

"Selina's time draws near, and it is the only way I have to provide; so dear Aunt Sara, I think it my duty to go. I can't summon courage to bid you good-bye. I can't speak a word to her. I should not be a man again in a month if I tried. You have been a mother to me, Aunt Sara, and if God spares my life, I'll be a dutiful son to you in the place of them that's gone. If any thing happens to my poor wife, you will see to my child, I know,

"Your dutiful nephew,

"JAMES MCDERMOT.

"New-York, 25 September, 1827."

"I declare Fanny, you have said it right, date and all, and what a date it was to me, that 25th of September:—that



day your father sailed—that very day you were born—and that very day, when the tide went out, your mother died;—life coming—life going—and the dear life of my last boy launched on the wide sea. *My* boy I always called your father; he was like my own sons to me. He lived just one week after he got to Orleans, and the news came Evacuation Day. We have always been, that is, the Rankin side, a dreadful family for dying young—all but me. I've lived to follow all my folks to the grave. My three boys I have seen laid in the ground; full grown, six feet men, and here I am, my strength failing, my eyes dim, working, shivering, trembling on."

Poor little Fanny shivered too, and putting some more wood into the stove, she asked her aunt if it were not time for supper; but Mrs. Hyat, without hearing her, went on, rather talking to herself, than the child. "There has always been something notable about times and seasons, with our folks. I was born the day the revolutionary war was declared—my oldest was born the day Washington died; my youngest sister, your grandmother, Fanny, died the day of the Total Eclipse; my husband died the day that last pesky little war was declared; your father saw your mother the first time 'lumination night, and as I said, it was Evacuation Day, we got the news of his death; poor Jemmy! what a dutiful boy he was to me! half my life went with his! How that letter is printed on your memory, Fanny! But you have better learning than ever I had, and that makes the difference! Learning is not all though, Fanny; you must have prudence. Did I not hear you talking on the stairs yesterday with some of them Irish cattle?"

"Yes, aunt, I was thanking Mrs. O'Rourke for bringing up my pail of water for me."

"That was not it, 'twas a racket with the children I



heard." Fanny made no reply. "I won't have it, Fanny; you're no company for Irish, and never shall be; the Lord made 'em to be sure, that is all you can say for 'em—you can scarce call them human creturs."

"They are very kind, Aunt Sara."

"So are dogs kind, Fanny. I have moved, and moved, and moved to get into a house free of them, but they are *varmint*, and there is no getting away from them. It's the Lord's will that they should overrun us like frogs and locusts, and must be; but I'll have no right-hand of fellowship with them. There I have set down my foot. Now, child, tell me what was all that hurry skurry about."

Mrs. Hyat gave Fanny small encouragement to communicate a scene in which the banned Irish were the principal actors. But after a little struggle, her sense of justice to them overcame her dread of the old woman's prejudices, and she told the true story.

"The overseer at the new buildings gave me leave to bring my basket again for kindlings. Pat and Ellen O'Roorke were there before me, and they picked out all the best bits and put them into my basket, and it was pretty heavy, and Pat would bring it home for me; he was so kind, how could I huff him, Aunt Sara? but I was afraid you would see him, that was the truth, and I wanted to take the basket before we got to the house; so I ran across the street after him, and there was a young gentleman driving a beautiful carriage, with a servant beside him, and another behind, and one of the horses just brushed against me and knocked me over. Pat and Ellen were frightened, and mad too, and Pat swore, and Ellen screamed, and the gentleman stopped, and the man behind jumped off and came to us, and Pat kicked him, and he struck Pat, and the gentleman got out and stopped



the fight, and said he was very sorry, and offered Pat money, and Pat would not touch it. The Irish have some high feelings, aunt, for all; and I am sure they are kind as kind can be."

"Well, well, go on; did the gentleman say any thing to you?"

"Yes, aunt; he saw there was a little blood on my cheek, and he took off my bonnet and turned off my hair; it was but a little bruised—and—and—"

"*And, and*, and what, child?"

"Nothing, aunt, only he wiped off the place with his pocket handkerchief, and—kissed it."

"It's the last time you shall stir outside the door, Fanny, without me."

"Aunt Sara! I am sure he meant no harm, he was a beautiful gentleman."

"Beautiful, indeed! Did he say any thing more to you?"

"He said something about my hair being—looking—pretty, and he cut off a lock with my scissors that you hung at my side yesterday, and he—he put it in his bosom." As Fanny finished, there was a tap at the door, and on opening it, she recognized the liveried footman of her admirer. In one hand he held a highly ornamented bird-cage containing a canary, and in the other a paper parcel.

"The gentleman as had the misfortune to knock you down yesterday, sends you these," he said, smiling at Fanny; and setting them down on the table, he withdrew.

Fanny was enchanted. "The very thing I always wanted," she exclaimed. The little singing bird began at once to cheer her solitude, to break with its sweet notes the heavy monotony of her day, to chime in harmony with the happy voice of her childhood. While Fanny, forgetting her supper



and the paper parcel, was trying to quiet the frightened fluttering of the timid little stranger, Mrs. Hyat, lost in a reverie of perplexity and anxiety, was revolving Fanny's adventure and its consequences ; a world of dangers that must beset the poor girl, when, as in the course of nature it soon must be, her protection was withdrawn, were all at once revealed to her.

Fanny was just thirteen, and the extreme beauty that had marked her childhood, instead of passing away with it, was every day developing and ripening. Her features were symmetrical, and of that order which is called aristocratic, and so they were, of nature's aristocracy ; if that be so which is reserved for her rarest productions. Her complexion was fair and soft as the rose-leaf, and the colour, ever varying on her cheek, ever mounting and subsiding, with the flow and ebb of feeling ; her hair was singularly beautiful, rich and curling, and though quite dark, reflecting, when the light fell on it, a ruddy glow.

"If she looked like other children," thought Sara Hyat, as her eye rested on Fanny, "she might have been thrown down and had both her legs broken, and that young spark would never have troubled himself about her. If it had but pleased God to give her her grandfather's bottled nose, or her father's little gray twinkling eyes ; or if she had favoured any of the Floods, or looked like any of the Rankins—except her poor mother. But what a picture of a face to throw a poor girl with, alone, among the wolves and foxes of this wicked city. Oh, that men were men, and not beasts of prey !

"Fanny—Fanny—child"—the old woman's voice trembled, but there was an earnestness in it that impressed each word as she uttered it, "mark my words, and one of these days,



when I am dead, and gone, you will remember them ; God gives beauty, Fanny, for a trial to some, and a temptation to others. That's all the use I could ever see in it ; to be sure, its a pretty thing to look upon, but its just like a rose ; by the time it is blowed out it begins to fade. Now do leave that bird-cage one minute and listen to me. This is what I want you to remember," proceeded the old woman, with more earnestness and stronger emphasis, "when men follow you, and flatter you, turn a deaf ear, Fanny ; pay no kind of attention to them, and if they persevere, fly away from them as you would from rats."

"Aunt Sara ! I don't know what you mean ?"

"The time will come when I can make my meaning plainer ; for the present it is enough for you to know, that you must not listen to fine dressde men ; that you must not take presents from them ; that you must go straight to school and come straight home from it, and say nothing to nobody. If ever I get the money that good-for-nothing Martin owes me for work done four years ago, I'll buy you a bird, Fanny ; but if you can get a chance, you must send this back where it came from."

"Oh, Aunt Sara ! must I ?"

"Yes. What is in that paper ? Untie it."

Fanny untied it. It enveloped a quantity of bird seed, and a dainty basket filled with French bonbons. Fanny involuntarily smiled, and then looked towards her aunt, as if to ask her if she might smile. The cloud on the old lady's brow lowered more and more heavily, and Fanny said timidly—

"Must I send these back too, aunt, or may I give them to Pat and Ellen ? I won't eat any myself."

"You are a good child, Fanny, and docile. Yes, you may go down and hand them in, and don't stay talking with



them; and mind again, if ever an opportunity comes, the bird goes back."

Fanny could not, for her life, see the harm of keeping the bird; it seemed to her that the gentleman was very kind, but the possibility of disobedience to her aunt, or of contending with her, did not occur to her. She knew, and that was enough to know, that her aunt indulged her whenever she thought indulgence right, and that she strained every nerve for her. Her wishes were not as easily subdued as her will, and each day as she grew more in love with her canary, they became stronger and stronger, that the opportunity might never come to send them away.

But come it did. The following Thursday was Christmas day, a holiday of course to Fanny, but none to Mrs. Hyat, who, having been strictly bred a Presbyterian, held in sectarian disdain even this dearest and most legitimate of holidays.

She was doing the daily task by which she earned her bread, making coarse garments for a neighbouring slop-shop. Fanny had done up the house-work, and put the room into that holiday order which is to the poor what fine furniture and fancy decorations are to the rich. She had fed her canary bird, and talked to it, and read through the last tract left at the door, and she was sitting gazing out of the window, thinking how happy the people must be who rode by in their carriages, and wondering, as she saw dolls, baby-houses and hobby-horses, carried by, where all the children could live who got these fine presents. "There is nobody to send me one," she thought. As if in answer to her thought, there was a tap at the door, and the well-known liveried footman appeared with a huge paper parcel.

Fanny's rose-coloured cheek deepened to crimson. Mrs.



Hyat surveyed the lad from head to foot, and nodding to Fanny, asked, "Is it he?"

"Yes, aunt."

"It's something for you, miss," said the footman, advancing, and about to deposit a parcel on the table before Mrs. Hyat; "it's Christmas day, old lady," he added pertly; "a nice day for young people as has red cheeks and bright eyes."

"Hum! you need not take the trouble to set that thing down here."

"We'll ma'am, here will do just as well," he said, placing it on the bureau.

"Nor there, either, young man;" but he, without heeding her, had already untied the parcel, and displayed to Fanny's enraptured eyes a rosewood work-box, with brilliant lining of crimson velvet, and fittings of steel and silver utensils. It was but a single glance that Fanny gave them, for she remembered the goods were contraband, and she averted her eyes and cast them down.

"Tie the thing up, and take it where it came from," said Mrs. Hyat. "What is your master's name?"

"The gentleman as employs me is Mr. Nugent Stafford, Esquire."

"Where does he live?"

"At the Astor House."

"Give him the bird, Fanny."

Poor little Fanny obeyed, but with a trembling hand and tearful eye. The little bird had been a bright spirit in her dead daily life. "Take them all back," continued Mrs. Hyat, "and tell Mr. What's-his-name? that such fine things are for fine people: that we are poor and honest, and plain-spoken, and if he is a real friend to us, he'll leave us to eat



the bread of our own earning, without disturbing our minds with things that's no way suited to us."

The footman and Fanny stood a little behind Mrs. Hyat, and he taking advantage of her deafness, shrugged his shoulders, saying, "Crusty, crusty"—and adding, with a diabolical prescience fitting the school in which his master bred him, "if ever you hear a whistle under your window, three times repeated, come down."

"What are you waiting for? you've got your message, man."

"I was waiting for your second thoughts, old lady."

"I've given you my first thoughts, and I'm not one that thinks my thoughts twice over, so you may go to Mr. What-do-you-call-him? as quick as you please." The man departed, bowing and kissing his hand to Fanny, as he shut the door. "What said the fellow to you?" asked her aunt, who had heard, as deaf people generally hear, what is meant not to reach their ears.

"Oh, aunt," replied Fanny, "he said something about your being crusty."

Most unfortunately, and for the first time in her life, she dealt unfairly by her aunt. Sincerity is the compass of life; there is no safe sailing without it. The poor child was perplexed. Stafford's gifts had charmed her. She did not see clearly why they were rejected. She was already filled with vain longings for some variation of her dull existence; and she was but thirteen years old! Seldom have thirteen years of human life passed with a more stainless record. To do her duty, to be quiet, industrious, and true, from being Fanny's instinct, had become her habit. The fountain of her affections had never yet been unsealed. Was that well-spring



of everlasting life to be poisoned? She had committed her first deceit, poor child!

We have gone too much into detail, we must limit ourselves to the most striking particulars of our story.

A year passed. Christmas came again, and the day wore drearily away. "Mr. Stafford has forgotten me," sighed Fanny in her inmost heart, as she remembered her last Christmas gift.

"That flushy fellow, with his yellow cape and cuffs, won't trouble us again, I'm thinking," said Mrs. Hyat. The day deepened into twilight;—Fanny heard a whistle—she started—it was repeated, and again repeated. She drew near to her aunt as if for defence, and sat down by her, her heart throbbing. After a few minutes, there were again three whistles, still she sat resolutely still.

Mrs. Hyat laid down her slop-sewing, wiped her spectacles, and heaving a deep sigh, said, "I grow blinder and blinder, but I won't murmur as long as it pleases God that I may earn honest bread for you and me, Fanny." Fanny looked up, and her aunt saw there were tears in her eyes. "Poor child," she continued, "it is not a merry Christmas you are having." The whistle was again repeated. "Go to the baker's, Fanny, and buy us a mince-pie—it won't break us; I can pay for it, if I work till twelve to-night, and it will seem more like Christmas to you."

Again Fanny heard the whistle; the opportunity was too tempting to be resisted, and Fanny threw a shawl over her head and ran down stairs. A man wrapped in a cloak had just passed the door; he turned back at the sound of her footsteps, threw his arms around her, and kissed her cheek. She sprung up the door-step, but he gently detained her, and



she, looking up in his face, saw that it was Stafford himself, and not, as she supposed, his servant.

"Why do you run away from me?" he said, in a low, sweet voice; "how have I frightened you? Am I not your friend? None can feel a greater interest in you. I will prove it in any way that I can."

Fanny's instincts directed her aright, and fixing her beautiful eyes on him, she said, "Come up, then, and say to my aunt what you say to me."

She did not understand the smile that lurked on Stafford's lips as he replied, "No, your aunt, for some reason, I am sure I cannot tell what, has taken a dislike to me; you know she has, for she will not permit you to receive the slightest gift from me. Come, you were going out, walk along, and let me walk by you." He slid his arm around her waist; she shrunk from him, and he withdrew it. "How old are you, Fanny McDermot? You perceive I know your name; and I know much more concerning you, that you would not suspect."

"Oh! Mr. Stafford, how should you know about me? I am fourteen, and a little more."

"Only fourteen? Fifteen, sixteen, seventeen will soon come, and each year, each month, you are growing more and more beautiful. Fanny, I dream of you every night of my life; and when I wake, my first thought of you is, 'I cannot see her—I cannot speak to her.'"

"Mr. Stafford?"

"It is true, Fanny, true as that the beautiful moon is shining on us. Why should it not be true? It is unnecessary, it is cruel, that you should be shut up in that forlorn old house with that old woman,"—the 'old woman' grated on Fanny's ear, but she did not interrupt Stafford, and he continued, "Do you like riding, or sailing?"



"I never rode but once, and that was to Uncle Ben's funeral, and I was never in a boat in my life."

"Come then on Monday, Fanny, at twelve o'clock, to the corner of Grand and Essex streets. I will be there, in a hackney coach, and I will take you a ride just as long, or as short as you please, and when spring comes, you shall go out with me in my boat by moonlight. I often pass an evening in rowing about the harbor, and I should take such pleasure in pleasing you."

"But, Mr. Stafford, Aunt Sara would never give me leave—never in the world."

"Do not ask her: how is she to know?"

"Why, I must tell her. I tell her every thing, and I never leave her but to go to school."

"And how is she to know that you are not at school?"

"Mr. Stafford, do you think I would deceive my Aunt Sara? No, never,—never."

They had arrived at the baker's shop. Fanny turned to enter it, and faltered out a "good night, sir."

"Stop and listen to me one moment," he said, detaining her. That one moment he prolonged till he had repeated, again and again, his professions of admiration and interest, and his entreaties that she would meet him. She remained true to herself, and to her aunt. She offered to tell her aunt of his kindness, and to ask her leave to take the ride. This he declined, saying "it would be useless," and finally, he was obliged to leave her, with only a promise from her, that she would not always disregard the whistle.

He kissed her hand, and thrust into it a purse. She would have followed him, and returned it, but at that moment two persons crossed the street, and interposed themselves between her and Stafford; and fearing observation, she re-



luctantly retained it. On examination, she found in it several gold pieces, and a small locket, with a very beautiful miniature of Stafford on one side, and a lock of his hair on the other. She had the resolution, after examining the features again and again, to tie it up with the purse of untouched money; certainly not without many a pang, as she slowly and hesitatingly did it, and directing the parcel to "Nugent Stafford, Esquire," she secretly gave it to her devoted thrall, Pat O'Rourke, a clever and honest boy, to convey it to that gentleman, at the Astor House.—Pat returned with the information, that there was no such gentleman there, and Fanny, without having any suspicion of foul play, concluded he was out of town. She hid the parcel from her aunt's eye, thinking it would uselessly disturb her, and still resolving to return it at the first opportunity.

She had thus far obeyed her conscience, and it "sat lightly on its throne."

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Two years glided away. Fanny's beauty, instead of passing with her childhood, had become so brilliant that it could not be unobserved. She shunned the street, where the vultures, that are abroad for prey, seeing she was young, and ascertaining that she was unprotected, had more than once beset her. A mine had long been working under her feet. The dreary companionship of the petulant old woman became every day more wearisome to her; still, she was gentle and patient, and for many a heavy month, endured resolutely a life that grew sadder and sadder, as she contrasted it with the world of beauty, indulgence and love, that had been painted to her excited imagination. For the last six months,



her aunt had been paralytic, moving from her bed to the chair with difficulty, supported by Fanny, whose slight figure tottered under the superincumbent weight of the massive old woman. Her faculties had decayed one after another; still the paramount affection of her being remained; the last lingering of daylight on the darkening night. She fancied herself still capable of earning their daily sustenance, and hour after hour, she would move the only arm she could move, as if she were sewing, and at evening take the same garment, on which she had thus cheated herself for months, to Fanny, and falter out, "take it to Ray's, dear, and bring the pay." Fanny favoured the illusion, took the garment, and *always brought the pay.*

The O'Rourke's were still tenants of a room below, and since the old woman's illness, Fanny had often accepted the kind offers of their services. Ellen went on her errands, and Pat brought up her wood and water; and whenever she had occasion to go out (and such occasions recently came often, and lasted long), Mrs. O'Rourke would bring her baby, to tend in the "ould lady's room." Though Fanny, without any visible means of subsistence, was supplied with every comfort she could desire for her aunt or herself, Mrs. O'Rourke, from stupidity or humanity, or a marvellous want of curiosity, asked no questions.

On some points, she certainly was not blind. One day, Mrs. Hyat, after an ill turn, had fallen asleep, Mrs. O'Rourke was sitting by her, and Fanny appeared deeply engaged in reading. Ellen O'Rourke looked at the volume, and exclaimed, "Why, your book, Fanny, is bottom side up." Fanny burst into tears, and flung it from her.

"God help the child!" said Mrs. O'Rourke; "take the baby down stairs," she added to Ellen, "and stay by it till I



come. Now Fanny, darlint, spake out—what frets you. The mother that bore you, is not more tinder to you than Biddy O'Roorke; and have I not seen your eyes this three months always unquiet-like, and red too, and your cheek getting paler and paler?" Fanny buried her face in the bed-clothes. "Ah, honey dear, don't fret so; it's not to vex you, I'm speaking; the words have been burning on my tongue this six weeks gone, but the old lady jealoused us; and though I am old enough to be your mother, or grandmother for that, you looked so sweet and innocent-like I was afeard to spake my thought."

"I have no word to speak," said Fanny, in a changed and faltering voice, and the bed trembled with the ague that shook her.

At this moment Mrs. Hyat threw her arm out of bed, opened her eyes, and for the first time in many days, looked about her intelligently, and spoke distinctly, "Fanny."

Fanny sprang to her side, and Mrs. O'Roorke instinctively moved round to the head of the bed, where she could not be seen.

"Fanny," continued the old woman, slowly, but with perfect distinctness, "I am going—you will follow soon—you will, dear. Be patient, be good." The blood coloured again her faded and withered cheek as she spoke, and mounting to her brain, gave her a momentary vigour. "Trust in God, Fanny, trust in God, and not in man. I go—but I do not leave you alone, Fanny,—not alone,—no—no—not alone." The utterance grew fainter and fainter, a slight convulsion passed over her whole frame, and her features were still and rigid. Fanny gazed in silent fear and horror. Her eye turned from her aunt to Mrs. O'Roorke, with that question



she could not utter. The kind woman said nothing, but gently closed the staring, vacant eyes.

"Oh! she is dead!" cried Fanny, throwing herself on the bed in a paroxysm of grief. "My last friend; oh! I am alone—alone. God has left me—I have left him. I deceived her. Oh dear—oh dear!"

In vain Mrs. O'Rourke tried to calm and comfort her, she wept till she fell asleep from utter exhaustion. Nature did the kind work it does so well to elastic youth, and she awoke in the morning calm, strengthened, and refreshed. She seemed, as Mrs. O'Rourke said, changed from a helpless girl to a woman. She sent for her aunt's clergyman, and by his intervention, and the aid of an undertaker, she made provision for burying her beside her husband and children; and attended by the clergyman, she followed her last and faithful old relative to the grave; and returned to her desolate apartment, a dreary world behind her, and fearful clouds hovering around her horizon—poor young creature!

She paid the charges of the funeral; those charges that always come, a sordid and vexing element, with the bereavements of the poor; and late the following evening, Mrs. O'Rourke, hearing, as she fancied, a footstep descending the stair, and soon after a carriage rolling away, mounted to verify or dismiss her suspicions. There was no answer to her knock; the door was not locked, she opened it; a lamp was burning on the table, and a letter, the wafer yet wet, lying by it.

"Ellen," she called. Ellen came. "Who is this letter for, Ellen?"

"Why! for you, mother, and Fanny's writing!"

"Read it, Ellen; she knows I cannot read, and if there's e'er a secret in it, keep it as if it were your own."



Ellen read—"Mrs. O'Rourke,—You have been a kind friend to me, and I thank you; and give you, in token of my gratitude, all that I have in this room. My clothes please give to Ellen, and the purse with the two dollars, in the corner of the drawer, to Pat. With many thanks from me,

"Ever your grateful friend,

"FANNY MCDERMOT."

"The dear darlint; but faith, Ellen, that's not the whole of it; see if there's never a little something of a sacret shoved in betwixt the other words?"

"Ne'er a syllable, mother."

"Ne'er a what, child? t'was a sacret I asked for."

"You've got the whole, mother, every word."

"Sure it's not of myself I'm thinking; but the time may come, when she'll wish for as rough a friend as I am. God help her and guide her, poor child! in this rough, stony world—darlint child!"

It was some time before Ellen clearly comprehended that Fanny was gone from them, probably for ever; and it was some time longer, before these generous creatures could bear to consider themselves in any way gainers by her departure. They turned the key of Fanny's door, and went to their own room—Ellen to brood over what seemed to her an insolvable mystery, and her mother to 'guess and fear.'

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Fifteen months had now passed away since Fanny had looked out from her joyless home in Houston street, to an existence bright with promised love and pleasure. She had seen



“The distant gates of Eden gleam,  
And did not dream, it was a dream.”

Our readers must now follow her to an isolated house in the upper part of the city. There she had two apartments, furnished with more finery than elegance, or even neatness. The rose-coloured curtains were faded, the gilded furniture tarnished, and from the vases of faded artificial flowers Fanny's sickening thoughts now often turned to the white jessamine and rose, types of her lost purity, that blossomed in her Aunt Sara's window.

Fanny was not the first tenant of these apartments, which, with others in the same house, were kept, furnished and supplied, by a certain Mrs. Tilden, who herself occupied the basement rooms. Fanny, now by courtesy called Mrs. Stafford, was but little more than seventeen, just on the threshold of life! That fountain of love which has power to make the wilderness blossom, to fill the desert places of life with flowers and fruits, had been poisoned, and there was no more health in it. The eye, which should have been just opening to the loveliest visions of youth, was dull and heavily cast down, while tear after tear dropped from it on a sleeping infant, some few months on its pilgrimage “between the cradle and the grave.” The beautiful form of Fanny's features remained, but the life of beauty was gone; her once brilliant cheek was pale, and her whole figure shrunken. Health, self-respect, cheerfulness, even hope, the angel of life, were driven away for ever—and memory, so sparkling and sweet to youth, bore but a bitter chalice to poor Fanny's lips. She sat statue-like, till she started at a footstep approaching the door. A slovenly servant girl entered, in a pert and noisy manner, that expressed the absence of all deference,



and took from a handkerchief, in which it was wrapped, a letter addressed to Nugent Stafford, saying, "I've been to the Astor House, and the American, and the City Hotel, and all them boarding-houses down town, and there's no such person there. and nowhere else, I expect."

"What do you mean, Caroline?"

"Oh, nothing, only them as hangs out false colours must expect others to do the same by them. I suppose there's no more a Mr. Stafford than a Mrs. Stafford."

"Hush, my baby," said Fanny to the infant, stirred by her tremor.

"I want to have my wages paid to-day," continued Caroline, "as I am expecting to leave."

Fanny took out her purse, and paid the girl's demand. Caroline eyed it narrowly; there were but a few shillings left in it, and she changed the assault she had meditated, from the purse to a richer spoil.

"It's always rulable," she said, "when a girl lives in such a house as this, and serves the like of you, that she shall have extra pay, for risking character and so forth. I see your purse is rather consumptive, and I am willing to take up with your silk gown, spotted with pink and trimmed with gimp."

"Oh hush, my baby!" cried Fanny to the child, who, opening her eyes on the distressed countenance of her mother, was crying as even such young children will, from the instinct of sympathy. "The gown hangs in the closet," she replied steadily, "take it and go."

Caroline took it, and while she was deliberately folding it, she said, half consolingly, half impertinently, "It an't worth while grieving for nothing in this world, for it's a kind of confused place. Why it always comes to this sooner or



later. Your fine gentleman likes variety! You'll be as handsome as ever again if you'll leave off sighing and crying, and you may get as much of a husband as Stafford, and as good."

"Leave me, pray leave me," cried Fanny; and when Caroline shut the door, she threw herself on the bed with her baby, saying, amidst tears and shiverings, "Oh, has it come to this? deserted; lost! Am I such a thing that I cannot answer that cruel, bad girl? Oh God, have mercy! He will not hear me, for I only come to him when I have none other to go to. Hush, my baby. I wish we were in the grave together. Come, now—hush—do." She wiped away her tears, and catching up the child, rushed, half distracted, up and down the room, attempting to smile and play to it; and the poor little thing cried and smiled alternately.

The following are some extracts from the hapless letter which Caroline had brought back to her:

"Oh, Nugent Stafford, am I never, never to see you again! It is two months since you were here; two *months*! it seems two *years*; and yet when you were last here, and spoke those icy, cruel, insulting words, I thought it would be better never to see you again than to see you so. But come once more, and tell me if I deserved them from you.

"Remember, I was thirteen years old, an innocent, loving child—loving, but with little to love—when you first stole my heart. Did you then mean this ruin? God knows—you know—I don't. Did you plot it then? to steal away my innocence, when I should be no longer a child? You say you never promised to marry me, and you say that I knew what was before me. No, you never said one word of marrying me; but did you not swear to love, and cherish me so long



as you lived? And did you not tell me, over and over again, that that was all that marriage was in God's sight? Did you not say that I did not love you half as well as you loved me, and again and again reproach me with it? Were you not angry, so angry as to frighten me, because I would not desert my dear, good, old, faithful aunt, to go with you? And how have I loved you? I have given up my innocence for you, my good name, and the favour of God. I have loved only you, never have had a thought beyond you. I wore only the fine things to please you; and truly now I hate to look on them, for they were, in your eyes, the price of what I never sold, but *gave*.

"But for my poor baby, I would not send to you again; for her I will do any thing, but sin. Mrs. Tilden has twice told me I must leave this house. Six months' rent is due. I have ten dollars in my purse. Tell me where I am to go? What am I to do? I would not stay here if I could—the house has become hateful to me. I cannot bear the looks of Mrs. Tilden and Caroline. I cannot endure to have them touch my baby, for it seems to me as if their touch to my little innocent child were like a foul thing on an opening rosebud. The very sound of their voices disgusts and frightens me. Oh! it was not human to put me among such creatures. If you have deserted me for ever, I will earn food if I can to keep my baby alive. If I cannot earn, I will beg; but I will live no longer among these bad people. I had rather perish with my baby in the street. Oh! Mr. Stafford, how could you have the heart to put me here? and will you not now give me a decent home—for the baby's sake—for a little while—till I am stronger, and can work for her?"

There was much more in the letter than we have cited; but it was all of the same tenor, and all showed plainly, that



though betrayed and deserted, poor Fanny was not corrupted. Bold, and hardened indeed, must have been that human creature who could have cast the first stone at her.

For some months after Stafford took her under his protection (the *protection* the wolf affords the lamb!) he was passionately devoted to her. He made her world, and made it bright with such excess of light, that she was dazzled, and her moral sense overpowered. There was no true colouring or proportion to her perception; she was like one, who, having imprudently gazed at the sun, sees every object for a time in false and brilliant colouring. But these illusions fade by degrees to blackness; and so, as Fanny recovered from the bewilderment of passion, the light became shadow—ever deepening, immovable shadow. She lost her gayety, and no twilight of cheerfulness succeeded to it. The birth of her child recalled her to herself—the innocent creature was God's minister to her soul—her pure love for it made impure love hateful to her. She became serious, then sad, and very wearisome to Stafford. He was accustomed to calling forth the blandishments of art. Fanny had no art. Her beauty was an accident, independent of herself. The unappreciable treasure of her immeasurable love she gave him, and for this there is no exchange but faithful, pure love; so her drafts were on an empty treasury. Passion consumes, sensuality rusts out the divine quality of love. Fanny's character was simple and true—elemental. She had little versatility, and nothing of the charm of variety which comes from cultivation, and from observation of the world. What could she know of the world, whose brief time in it had been passed between her school and Dame Hyat's room in Houston street!

Stafford was extremely well read in certain departments



of romantic literature. He had a standing order with a Paris publisher for such books as "George Sand," "Paul de Kock," and all their tribe produce. But this was a terra incognita to Fanny. Her reading was confined to the Bible and the tracts left at her aunt's door. He delighted in those muses who have come down from the holy mount of inspiration and sacrificed to impure gods. Poetry, beyond that of her aunt's hymn-book, was unknown to Fanny; and when Stafford brought her *Beppa*, and *Don Juan*, she understood but little of them, and what she understood she loathed. Stafford loved music. It was to him the natural language and fittest excitement of passion, and poor Fanny had no skill in this divine art beyond a song for her baby. He gave her lascivious engravings; she burst into tears at the sight of them, and would not be moved by his diabolical laugh and derision to look a second time at them. The natural dissimilarity and opposition between them came soon to be felt by both. He was ready to cast her—no matter where—as a burden from him; and she had already turned back, to walk through the fires her sin had kindled, to the bosom of infinite love and compassion.

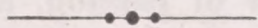
Stafford's vices were expensive, and like most idle, dissipated young men of fortune, he soon found his expenditures exceeding his income. He had no thought of sacrificing his vices to his wants, but only the objects of them. He had of late felt his mode of life to be so burdensome, that he resolved on reforming it, or rather, on reducing his pleasures, by marrying a young woman whose large fortunes would be a relief to him, whose beauty and elegance would adorn his establishment, and whose character would fill up certain awkward blanks in his own.

A person so gifted, and attainable, as he flattered himself,



he had discovered in Augusta Emly. Miss Emly's mother was a leading woman of fashion in the city, and she had received his first demonstrations with unequivocal indications of favour.

He deliberately determined to leave Fanny as he had done others, to shift for herself, quieting his conscience—it was easily pacified—with the reflection that he left her rather better off than he found her! As if simplicity, contentment, and a good name, were marketable articles, to be trafficked away for a few jewels, laces and silks, and a few months of luxurious life.



## CHAPTER II.

FANNY M<sup>C</sup>DERMOT might have lain down and died in the extremity of her despair at finding herself finally deserted, or in her self-condemnation she might have done violence to her life; but her child was God's argument to reason, patience, calmness, and exertion.

She sat herself to consider what could be done. In all this great city, Mrs. O'Rourke was her only acquaintance, and though poor and ignorant, she was too her friend, and Fanny was in a strait to know the worth of that word *friend*.

"She can, perhaps, tell me where to find employment," thought Fanny, "and certainly she will be kind to me." And to her she determined to go. She laid aside all her fine clothes, which were now unfit for her, and had become disgusting to her, and putting on a gingham dressing-gown, and over it a black and white plaid cloak, which, with a neat straw bonnet (her aunt's last gifts), seemed, as she looked at herself in them, in some degree to restore her self-respect, "Dear, honest old friends," she exclaimed, "would that I had



never laid you aside!" It was with a different feeling that she took up and laid down, one after another, the pretty frocks she had delicately made and daintily trimmed for her baby. "She looks so pretty in them," she thought; "and I am sure there is no sin in her looking pretty!" But after a little shrinking, she dressed the baby in a cotton night-gown, and took off her coral necklace, bracelets, and bells. She then wrapped her warmly in shawls, and left the house, and after walking two squares, she reached a railroad car. There were several persons in the car when she entered, and as usual, they turned their eyes on the new comer, but not, as usual, turned them away again. Those exquisite features arrested the dullest eye, and there was something in the depth of expression on that young face, to awaken interest in the dullest soul. One man touched his neighbour, who was absorbed in his newspaper, and directed his eyes to Fanny. Two young women interchanged expressions of wonder and curiosity with their eyes fixed on her. A good little boy, feeling an instinctive sympathy with something, he knew not what, expressed it by offering her some pea-nuts, and when she looked up to thank him, she became for the first time conscious of the general gaze; and thankful she was, when, at the intersection of Houston-street, the car stopped to let her out. "Have a care," said a Quaker woman at her side, as she rose, "thee art young, child, to be trusted with a baby." Fanny, overcome with emotion and fatigue—for it was long since she walked out—was ready to sink, when, after having walked nearly a mile down Houston-street, she came to her former home. The O'Rourke's were not there. "They had moved many months since," her informer said, "down into Broome-street, near the North River." "Was it far?" Fanny asked. "Faith! it was!" "Might she come in and rest herself?"



"Indeed isn't she welcome ; and a shame it is for any lady to send such a delicate cratur out with a baby in her arms."

When Fanny entered and saw the stairs she had so often, in her childhood, trodden, the tears started to her eyes ; and, when her baby waked, and would not be quieted without food from her breast, she perceived the women exchanging significant nods and looks, and overcome by weakness and a gush of emotion, she burst into hysterical sobbings. "Poor young cratur ! poor young cratur ! God help you !" exclaimed the woman, with a true Irish gush of feeling : "and what is't you're wanting ? Here's a drink of milk ; take it, honey dear ; it will strengthen you better than whiskey. We've done with that, thank God and Father Matthew."

Fanny made a violent effort, calmed herself, drank the milk, and asked if a cab could not be got for her. There was one passing, and at the next instant she was in it, and driving to Broome-street. She found the house, but the O'Roorke's had flitted, and in another and distant quarter of the city, she found the second dwelling to which she was directed. Again they had moved, and whither, no one could tell ; and feeling as if the last plank had gone from under her feet, she returned to her home. Home ! alas, that sacred word had now no meaning to poor Fanny. She had scarcely entered her room and thrown herself on the sofa with her baby, when Mrs. Tilden, her remarkably red-faced landlady, threw open the door and said—

"Are you back ? I did not expect you alone."

"Not expect me alone ? What do you mean ?"

"Why it's customary for some kind of folks, you know, when they lose one husband, to take another."

Fanny looked up ; a sickening feeling came over her ; the words she would have answered died away on her lips.



"I suppose you are sensible," continued Mrs. Tilden, "that honest folks must be paid just debts, and as there's no finding that Mr. Stafford of yours, I have 'strained upon your wearing apparel, that being answerable for rent as well as furniture; and all the furniture belonging to me already, except the sofa and the Psyche, and the vases and the dressing case,—them things will help out, but the whole quarter's rent, and eight days over, is due."

Fanny said nothing.

"I am never ungenerous to nobody. So I have taken out enough baby linen to serve you, and a change for yourself—the rest is under my lock and key, and I shall keep it, may be, a month or more before I sell it; and if Mr. Stafford pays me in that time—and I don't misdoubt he will, sooner or later—but them kind of fine gentlemen are slow coaches in paying, you know, but I don't question his honor; he has always been highly honourable to me; and I have been highly honourable to him; he is a real gentleman, there's no mistake—as I was saying, as soon as he pays me, you shall have your things—or—the worth of them again; you shall have it all, bating some little reward for my trouble—the Psyche, or dressing-case—or so."

"Well," said Fanny, perceiving Mrs. Tilden had paused for an answer.

"Well," that's all—only if you and I can agree, you can stay down stairs, as a boarder——till"

"No—not a moment—only let me remain in the room to-night, and to-morrow I will try to find a service place."

"A service place! My service to you!" said Mrs. Tilden, with a sort of ogress grin.

"Oh, don't look so at me! Mrs. Tilden, do you think, that, after all, I have any pride?"



"Pride, pride! Why, you foolish child, don't you know that '*after all*,' as you call it, there is but one kind of service left for you? Ladies won't take the like of us into their houses."

"The like of us," thought Fanny, and shuddered.

"They are dreadful partic'lar about any little false step of their own sex. If you but dampen the soles of your feet, it is as bad as if you are up to your neck in the mire; but men may plunge in over their head and ears, and they are just as welcome to their houses, and as good husbands for their daughters, as your Josephs—"

"Is it so? Can it be? I do not know what will become of me! Oh, baby, baby! But may I stay here to-night?"

"Why, yes; but you must be off pretty early, for there's a lady coming to look at the rooms at ten."

Poor Fanny, left alone, sank on her knees, with one arm round her sleeping baby, and sent out from her penitent and humble heart, a cry for forgiveness and pity, that we doubt not was heard by Him whose compassions fail not. She then threw herself on the bed and fell asleep. Thank God, no degree of misery can drive sleep away from a wearied young creature.

The next morning she laid her plans, and strengthening her good resolutions by prayer, she went forth feeling a new strength; and having paid the fee with two of the only four shillings left to her,\* to the master of an intelligence office, who stared curiously at her, she received references to three ladies—"the very first-rate of places, all," as the man

\* For the honour of human nature, and especially the most generous of human natures, Irish nature, we should have told, that on the preceding day, Fanny's cab-driver seeing the meagreness of her purse, refused to take pay from her.



assured her. She first went to a lady who wanted a wet nurse as a supplement to her own scanty supplies. She met a young lady in the hall, whom she heard say to her mother, "Oh, mamma! such a pretty young creature has come for wet nurse to sis—do take her." Fanny was called in, and having given satisfactory answers as to her supplies, she was asked for references. She immediately did what she had before purposed, and confessing she had no references to give, told truly so much of her sad story as explained her present position. The lady heard her through, possibly not believing a word she said, but the fact of her transgression; and when she had finished, she said to her, "Did you really expect that such a person as you could get a place in a respectable family?" She rung the bell, and added coolly, "Thomas, show this person out. This is the last time I go to an intelligence office."

Poor Fanny sighed as she left the door, but pressing her baby to her bosom, she said softly, "We'll not be discouraged with one failure, will we, baby?" The child smiled on her, and she went on with a lighter step. Her next application was to a milliner, whom the master of the intelligence office had told her "was a very strict religious lady, who says she is very particular about the reputation of her girls." It is close by, thought Fanny. "I have but little hope, but I must save my steps, and I will go to her." Again, bravely and simply she told the truth. The milliner heard her with raised brows. "I am sorry for you, if you tell the truth, young woman," she said. "I know this city is a dreadful place for unprincipled girls, and I make it a rule never to take any such into my establishment. I hope you do mean to reform, but I can do nothing for you; I advise you to apply to the Magdalen Society."



Again Fanny went on. She had now to go from William-street to the upper part of the city; and precious as her six-pences had become, she felt it was utterly impossible for her to walk. She, therefore, on reaching Broadway, got into an omnibus, and was soon at the door of Mrs. Emly's fine house in Waverley Place, and was shown into a room where that lady was sitting in her peignior, looking over with her sister some dresses that were to be trimmed for a party the following evening. A very elegant young woman was sitting at a table drawing.

"A sempstress, ma'am, from the intelligence office," said the servant, announcing Fanny.

"A sempstress, with a child!" exclaimed Mrs. Emly.

The young lady looked up at Fanny as she entered; she was struck by her beauty, with her excessive delicacy, and with the gushing of the blood to her pale cheek at Mrs. Emly's exclamation. She rose, handed Fanny a chair, and saying most kindly, "What a very pretty child, mamma;" she offered to take it. The little creature stretched out its hands in obedience to the magnetic influence of beauty, youth, and a countenance most expressive of cheerful kindness. If, as is sometimes said, a voice may be "full of tears," this lovely young creature's was "full of smiles." Fanny looked up most gratefully, as the young lady took her infant, saying to her, "You must be very tired—is it not very tiresome to carry a baby?"

"The baby does not seem to tire me; but I am not very strong," replied Fanny, wiping away the tears that were gathering at the gentleness addressed to her.

"You do not look strong, nor well," said the young lady, and she poured out a glass of wine and water, and insisted on Fanny taking that, and some more solid refreshment, from



the waiter on which a servant had just served lunch. It was well for poor Fanny that she accepted the hospitality, for she needed to be fortified for what followed. Fanny had been so thoroughly drilled in sewing by her aunt, who, it may be remembered, was a tailoress, that she answered very confidently, as to her abilities as a sempstress. She should be content, she said, with any wages, or no wages, for the present, if Mrs. Emly would put up with the inconvenience of her child."

"Oh, the child will not be in my way, said Mrs. Emly; you'll be up in the attic, and I shan't hear it; so, if you will give me a satisfactory reference, I will try you."

"I have never lived out," answered Fanny. Discouraged by the rebuffs she had already received, she shrunk from a direct communication of her position.

"Well, where do your parents live? If I find you have decent parents, that will be enough."

"My parents died—long ago—I lived with my aunt—and she is dead—and I am——friendless."

"Aha!" said Mrs. Emly, with an emphatic nod of her head to her sister, who screwed up her mouth, and nodded back again. The young lady walked up to her mother, and said to her in a low voice, and with an imploring look—

"Mamma, for Heaven's sake don't say any more to her; I am sure she is good."

"Ridiculous, Augusta; you know nothing about it," replied Mrs. Emly aloud. And turning to Fanny, she said, "How comes it that you are friendless and alone in the world? Have you not a husband?"

"No," answered Fanny, some little spirit mounting with her mounting colour. "I never had a husband, I have been



betrayed and forsaken—I am no farther guilty,—no more innocent.”

“Quite enough! quite enough! I can't of course take any such person into my house.”

“Then my baby and I must die, for nobody will take us in,” said Fanny, bursting into tears, and gathering her cloak about her.

“Oh, mamma,” said Augusta Emly, “for pity's sake let her stay. I will answer for her.”

“Pshaw! Augusta, how very absurd you are! No respectable lady would take a person of that kind into her house.”

“Then what is their respectability worth, mamma, if it cannot give help to a weak fellow-creature?”

“Miss Augusta,” said a servant, opening the door, “Mr. Sydney is below.”

“Tell Mr. Sydney I am engaged, Daniel.”

“Augusta,” said her mother, “you are not going to send away Russel Sydney in that nonchalant manner. What do you mean? Give the child to its mother, and go down. ‘It's a lucky moment for her,’ she said, in a whisper to her sister. ‘She has such a beautiful glow on her cheek.’”

It was a beautiful glow—the glow of indignant humanity.

“I cannot go down, mother. Daniel, say I am engaged.”

In another instant, Daniel returned with a request from Mr. Sydney, that Miss Emly would ride with him the following day; ‘he had purchased a charming lady's horse, and begged she would try it.’

“Oh, what shall I say, mamma? I cannot go.”

Mrs. Emly, without replying to Augusta, opened the door, and brushing by Fanny, who had risen to depart, she called from the head of the stairs, “Mr. Sydney, excuse me; I am in my dressing-gown and cannot come down. Will you come



to the staircase? We are so up to our eyes arranging with the dressmaker for Mrs. Davies', that you must excuse Augusta this morning. She is a little timid, since her accident about riding. Are you sure of your horse?"

"Perfectly. Lord bless me! would I ask Miss Emly, if I were not?"

At the sound of the responding voice, Fanny sprang forward, and then staggering back again, leaned against the door.

"Oh! very well, then," said the compliant mamma, "she will be ready for you at twelve. Good morning!"

"Good morning!" was answered, and Mrs. Emly turned towards her apartment, elated with having settled the matter according to her own wishes. Fanny grasped her arm,—  
"For God's sake, tell me," she said, in a voice scarcely audible, "where does Mr. Sydney live? he it is that has deserted me. Where can I find him?"

Mrs. Emly's spirit quailed before Fanny's earnestness—her unmistakable truth; but after a single moment's hesitation, she discreetly said—"I don't know; he lives somewhere at lodgings. You have probably mistaken the person."

"Mistaken,—oh Heaven!" exclaimed Fanny, and glided down stairs as if there were wings to her feet; but before she could reach the pavement, Sydney had mounted into his very handsome new phaeton, and was driving proudly up the street, gallantly bowing to some ladies at their balcony windows, and poor Fanny crept on she knew not why nor whither.

"What did that poor girl say to you, mamma? Did she mention Sydney's name?" asked Augusta Emly.

"Sydney's name? Why should she mention it? I did not hear her. She might, perhaps—she muttered something. She is a little beside herself, I think."



"Do you, mamma?"

There could not be a stranger contrast, than Miss Emly's earnest tone and her mother's flippant one.

"Poor—poor girl—how very beautiful she is! She reminded me of Ophelia. I think she has her senses now, but with that deep dejectedness, I should not wonder if she soon lost them. May God be more merciful to her than we have been. But, mamma, how could you say to Russel Sydney, that I would ride with him?"

"Why, are you going to stay at home and sigh over this lost damsel? You will ride with Sydney, unless you prefer to hurt my feelings, and displease me seriously."

"That I should be very sorry to do; but I cannot ride with Mr. Sydney."

"Cannot! and why?"

"How can you ask, mamma? How can you wish me to associate intimately with the sort of man he is?"

"What windmills are you fighting now, Augusta? For a sensible girl, you are the silliest I ever met with. What do you mean?"

"You surely know what I mean, mamma! You know that Russel Sydney has been one of the most dissipated men in the city."

"So have forty other men been who are very good husbands now, or whose wives are too prudent to make a fuss about it if they are not. Really, Augusta, I do not think it very creditable to a young lady, to be seeking information of this sort about young men."

"I have not sought it. I never dreamed," Augusta looked steadfastly in her mother's face, "that my mother would introduce a man to me who, as we both have heard, on good authority, has kept a mistress since he was eighteen, and



changed her as often as suited his caprice; but having heard this, I surely will not disregard it."

"You are absurdly scrupulous and very unjust, my dear. Sydney has entirely given up all this sort of thing—he assured me he had."

"And you relyingly took his assurance, mamma, and would not listen, for one moment, to that poor penitent girl's assurance."

"Oh that's quite a different thing."

"I see no difference, excepting that the one is the strong party, the other the weak,—the one the betrayer, the other the betrayed. The fact of the girl seeking honest employment is *prima facie* evidence in favour of her truth."

"You talk so absurdly, Augusta! And, to speak plainly, I do not think it over delicate," continued Mrs. Emly, with a pharisaical curl of her lip, "for an unmarried lady of nineteen to be discussing subjects of this nature—though it may be quite often your Aunt Emily's fashion to do so."

"It is very much my Aunt Emily's fashion to strip off the husk, and look for the kernel—to throw away the world's current counterfeit, and keep the real gold. Probably she would think it far more indelicate to receive a notoriously licentious man into her society, than to express her opinion of his vices: and I know she thinks it not only indelicate, but irrational and unchristian, to tolerate certain vices in men, for which women are proscribed and hunted down."

"Mercy on us, what an oration for nothing! Truly, you and your Aunt Emily, with your country-evening morals, are very competent judges of town society. It seems to my poor common-sense perceptions, that you are rather a partial distributor of your charities. You are quite willing to receive this equivocal young woman, with her confessedly illegitimate



child, and you would doubly bar and bolt the door against a very charming young man, who has sown his wild oats."

"Oh, surely mamma, this is not the true state of the case. The one party is a man of fashion, received and current, the other a poor young outcast, who seems more sinned against than sinning—probably the victim of some such 'charming' young man as Sydney. As women, as professed followers of Christ, my dear mother, ought we not to help her out of the pit into which she has fallen? May we not guard her from future danger and misery?"

Mrs. Emly stood for a moment silent and rebuked before the gentle earnestness of her daughter; but after a moment, she rallied and said with a forced laugh,—“You had best join the Magdalen Society at once, Augusta; they will give you plenty of this fancy-missionary work to do; I confess it is not quite to my taste.”

Augusta made no reply; she was too much pained by her mother's levity, and she took refuge in writing the incidents of the morning to that “Aunt Emily,” in whose pure atmosphere she had been reared.

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Sickenings with fatigue and disappointment, Fanny, helped on her way by an omnibus, returned to the intelligence office where she had left her bundle. The official gentleman there, on hearing the story of her failure, said, “Well, it's no fault of mine—you can't expect a good place without a good reference.”

“Oh, I expect nothing,” replied Fanny, “I hope for nothing, but that my baby and I may lay down together and die—very soon, if it please God!”

“I am sorry for you, I declare I am,” said the man,



who, though his sensibility was pretty much worn away by daily attrition, could not look, without pity, upon the pale, beautiful young creature, humble and gentle, and trembling in every fibre with exhaustion and despair. "You are tired out," he said, "and your baby wants taking care of. There's a decent lodging-house in the next street, No. 35, where you may get a night's lodging for a shilling. To-morrow morning you'll feel better,—the world will look brighter after a night's sleep. Come back to me in the morning, and I will give you some more chances. I won't go according to rule with you."

Fanny thanked him, kissed her baby, and again, with trembling, wavering steps, went forth. She had but just turned the corner, when, overcome by faintness, she sat down on a door-step. As she did so, a woman coming from the pump turned to go down into the area of a basement-room. She rested her pail on the step, and cast her eye inquisitively on Fanny.

"God save us!" she cried, "Fanny McDermot, darlint! I've found you at last—just as I expected! God punish them that's wronged you! Can't you spake to me, darlint? Don't you know Biddy O'Roorke?"

"Oh yes," replied Fanny, faintly, "my only friend in this world! Indeed I do know you."

"And indeed, and indeed, you cannot come amiss to me—you are welcome as if you were my own, to every thing I have in the world. Rise up, darlint, give me the babby. God's pity on it, poor bird;" and taking the infant in one arm, and supporting and nearly carrying the mother with the other, she conducted Fanny down the steps and laid her on her bed. With discreet and delicate kindness, she abstained, for the present, from inquiries, and contented herself with nursing the baby, and now and then an irrepressible overflow of her heart



in expression of pity and love to Fanny, and indignation and wrath against "bad craters, that had neither soul, nor heart, nor feelings, nor any such thing in them!"

In the course of the day Fanny so far recovered as to tell her friend her short, sad story, and to learn that affairs had mended with the O'Roorke's; that the drunken husband was dead, Pat and Ellen were out at service, and that the good mother, with a little help from them, and by selling apples and nuts, and now and then a windfall, got bread for herself and three little noisy, thriving children. The scantiness of her larder was only betrayed by her repeated assurances to Fanny that "she had plenty—plenty, and to spare, oceans—oceans," and when Fanny the next morning manifested her intention of going out again to seek a place, she said, "Na, na, my darlint, it's not that ye shall be after. Is not the bit place big enough for us all? It's but little ye're wanting to ate. Wait, any way, till ye's stronger, and the babby is old enough to wane, and then ye can lave it here to play with Anny and Peggy."

Fanny looked round upon the "bit place," and it must be confessed that she sickened at the thought of living in it, even with the sunny kindness of its inmates, or of leaving her little snowdrop of a baby there. The windows were dim with dirt, the floor was unwashen—a heap of kindlings were in one corner, potatoes in another, and coals under a bed, none of the tidiest. Broken victuals on broken earthen plates stood on the table, and all contrasted too strongly with the glossy neatness of her aunt's apartment. Surely Fanny was not fastidious.

"Oh, no, Mrs. O'Roorke," she said, "I can never, never leave my baby. I am better; and you are so kind to me, that I'll wait till to-morrow." And she did wait another day, but no persuasion of Mrs. O'Roorke could induce her to leave the in-



fant. She insisted that she did not feel its weight,—and that “looking on it was all that gave her courage to go among strangers,”—and “that now she felt easier, and more in heart, knowing she had such a kind friend to come to at night.”

Finding Fanny resolved, Mrs. O'Rourke said,—“Now don't be after telling them your misfortunes; just send them to me for your charackter. It's ten to one they'll not take the trouble to come; and if they do, I'll satisfy them completely.”

“And how?” asked Fanny, with a faint smile.

“Why, won't I be after telling them just the truth—how the good old lady brought you up like a nun, out of sunshine and harm's way; how you were always working with your needle, and quiet-like and dove-like—and how the ould lady doted on you, and that you were the best and beautifulest that ever crossed a door-sill.”

“But oh, dear Mrs. O'Rourke, how will you ever come to the dreadful truth?”

“And I'll not be after just that. If they bother with questions, can't I answer them civilly, Fanny McDermot? How will it harm a body in all the world just to be tould that ye's married your man, what died with consumption or the like of that?”

Fanny shook her head.

“Now what's the use, Fanny McDermot,” continued Mrs. O'Rourke, “of a tongue, if we can't serve a friend with it? Lave it all to me, darlint. You know I would not tell a lie to wrong one of God's craters. Would I be after giving you a charackter if you did not deserve it?”

“I know how kind and good you are to me, Mrs. O'Rourke,” said Fanny; “but I pray you say nothing for me but



the truth. I have asked God's forgiveness and blessing on me and my baby, and we must try to earn it. Promise me, will you?"

"Oh, be aisy, darlint, be aisy, and I'll be after doing what you wish." She wrapped the baby in its blanket, carried it up the steps, and put it in the mother's arms. "There, God guide you, Fanny McDermot. The truth!" continued Mrs. O'Rourke, as her streaming eyes followed Fanny; "and what's truth good for but to serve the like of her that's been wronged by a false-hearted villain, bad luck to him!"

It would take a very nice casuist to analyze the national moral sense of good Mrs. O'Rourke. The unscrupulous flexibility of the Irish tongue is in curious contrast with the truth of the Irish heart—a heart overflowing with enthusiasm, and generosity, and often instinctively grasping the best truth of life.

"I am thinking," said the master of the intelligence office, as he was doling out two or three references to Fanny, to families residing in different and distant parts of the city, "I am thinking you don't know much of the world, young woman?"

"I do not," replied Fanny, mournfully.

"Well then, I do, and I'll give you a hint or two. It's a world, child, that's looking out pretty sharp for number one; where each shows their fairest side, and looks all round their fellow *creturs*—where them that have the upper hand—you understand—them what employs others—thinks they have a right to require that they shall be honest and true and faithful, and so on to the end of the chapter of what they call good character; and not only that they be so, but that they have been so all their lives. The man that holds the purse may snap his fingers, and be and do what he likes. Now, there



can't be friendship in this trade, so what are the weak party to do but to make fight the best way they can? But I see you don't altogether take my ideas," he continued, perceiving Fanny was but half attentive, and replacing his spectacles, which he had taken off in beginning his lecture on the social system; "you'll see my meaning in the application. Now, 'I've asked no questions, and you've told no lies,' as the saying is, but I know pretty much what's come and gone—you see I understand all sorts of advertisements—by your beauty, by your cast-down eyes, with the tears standing on the eaves—by the lips that, though too pretty for any thing but smiles, look as if they would never smile again; by the—"

"Oh, please, sir, give me the papers and let me go."

"Wait—I have not come to it yet—to the pith. I feel like a father to you, child—I do. Now, my advice is, hold up your head; you've as much right, and more, I can tell you, than many a mistress of a fine house. Look straight forward, speak cheery, and say you're a widow."

Fanny looked up, with a glance of conscious integrity; and he added, with a slight stammer—

"Why should you not say so? You are *left*, and that is the main part of being a widow—left to provide for yourself and your young one, and that's the distressing part of being one. Every body pities the widow and orphan. And I should like to have any body tell me which is most complete a widow, a woman whose husband is dead, or you?—which the completest orphan, a child whose father lies under ground, or yours?"

Fanny stretched out her hand for the references, and took them in silence; but when she reached the door, she turned, and said, with a voice so sweet and penetrating that it was oil to the wounded vanity of the man, "I thank you, sir, for



wishing to help us; but baby," she added, mentally, straining her little burden to her bosom, "we will be true—we will keep our vow to God—won't we? He is merciful; Jesus was merciful, even to that poor woman that was brought before him by cruel men; and if nobody will take us in on earth, God may take us to Himself—and I think He will soon."

She walked on slowly and perseveringly, turning many streets, till she reached the first address to which she had been referred. There, she was received and dismissed as she had been on the previous day, and she went to look for the next; but she soon began to feel sensations she had never felt before, a pain and giddiness in the head, and a general tremulousness. She dragged on a little way, and then sat down. Gradually her mind became confused, and she determined to turn back at once, and make the best of her way to Mrs. O'Rourke, but to her dismay, she could not remember the name of the street where she lived nor that of the intelligence-office. "Oh, I am going mad," she thought, "and they will take my baby from me!" and making an effort to compose herself, she sat down on a door-step, and, to test her mind, she counted the panes in the windows opposite. "All is right yet," she thought, as she went steadily on and finished her task; "but why cannot I remember the name of that street? Do you know," she asked timidly of a man who was passing, and who looked like one of those persons who know every thing of the sort,—“do you know any street beginning with Van?”

"Bless me, yes, fifty. There's Vandam, and Vandewater, and"—

"Oh, stop there—it's one of those. Are they near together?"



"As near as east and west—one is one side of the city, and one the other." And he passed briskly on.

Poor Fanny sat down, and repeated to herself the names till she was more at a loss than ever. The passers-by looked curiously at her, and two or three addressing insolent words to her, she could endure it no longer, and she went slowly, falteringly on. Her head throbbed violently, and she felt that her lips were parched, and her pulse beating quick and hard. Her baby began to cry for food, and seeing some upright boards resting against a house, she crept under them to be sheltered from observation while she supplied her child's wants. There were two little girls there before her, eating merrily and voraciously from an alms-basket.

"Oh, my baby!" said Fanny aloud, "I am afraid this is the last time you will find any milk in your mother's breast."

The little beggar-girls looked at her pitifully, and offered her bread and meat.

"Oh, thank you," she said, "but I cannot eat. If you would only get me a drink of cold water."

"Oh, that we can as easy as not," said one of them; and fishing up a broken teacup from the bottom of her basket, she ran to a pump and filled it, and again and again filled it, as Fanny drank it, or poured it on her burning, throbbing head.

"It's beginning to rain," said one of the girls, "and I guess we had all better go home. You look sick—we'll carry your baby for you, if your home is our way."

"*My home!* No, thank you; my home is not your way."

The children went off slowly, looking back and talking in a low tone, and feeling as they had never quite felt before.

It was early in February, and the days of course were short. The weather had been soft and bright, but as the evening approached, the sky became clouded and a chilling



rain began. Fanny crept out of her place of shelter, after most anxiously wrapping up her baby, and at first, stimulated by the fever, walked rapidly on. Now and then she sat down, where an arched doorway offered a shelter, and remained half oblivious, till urged on again by her baby's cries.

It was eleven o'clock, when she was passing before a brilliantly lighted house. There was music within, and a line of carriages without. A gentleman was at this moment alighting from his carriage. Fanny shrunk back, and leaned against the area-railing till he should pass. He sprung quickly up the step to avoid the dropping eaves, and when in the doorway, turned to say, "Be punctual, at one o'clock." Fanny looked up: the light from the bright gas lamps beside the door shone in the speaker's face. "Oh, mercy, it is he!" she exclaimed, and darting forward, mounted the step. It was he! Sydney! He left the door ajar as he entered, and Fanny followed in; and as she entered, she saw Sydney turn the landing of the staircase. Above, was the mingled din of voices and music. Fanny instinctively shrunk from proceeding. Through an open door she saw the ruddy glow of the fire in the ladies' cloak-room. It was vacant. "I might warm my poor baby there," she thought, "and it's possible,—it is possible I may speak with him when he comes down,"—and she obeyed the impulse to enter. Her reason was now too weak to aid her, or she would not have placed herself in a position so exposed to observation and suspicion. When she had entered, she saw, to her great relief, a screen that divided a small portion of the room from the rest. She crept behind it, and seated herself on a cushion that had been placed there for the convenience of the ladies changing their shoes.

"How very fast you are sleeping, my baby," she said, "and yet," she added, shivering herself, "how very cold you



are!" And wrapping around it a velvet mantle that had fallen over the screen, she leaned her head against the wall, and partly stupefied by the change from the chilling street to the warm apartment, and partly from exhaustion, she fell asleep. What a contrast was she, in her silent, lonely desolation, with fever in her veins, and enveloped in cold, drenched, dripping garments, to the gay young creatures above,—thoughtless of any evil in life more serious than not having a partner for the next waltz! She, a homeless, friendless wanderer; they, passing from room to room amidst the rustling of satins, and soft pressure of velvets, and floating of gossamer draperies, with the luxury of delicious music, and an atmosphere sweet with the breath of the costliest exotics, and crowding to tables where Epicurus might have banqueted.

And such contrasts, and more frightful, are there nightly in our city, separated, perhaps, by a wall, a street, or a square; and knowing this, we sleep quietly in our beds, and spend our days in securing more comforts for ourselves, and perhaps complaining of our lot!

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More than an hour had passed away, when Fanny was awaked to imperfect consciousness by the murmuring of two female voices outside the screen. Two ladies stood there in their cloaks, waiting.

"How in the world," asked one, "did you contrive to make her waltz with him?"

"By getting her into a dilemma. She could not refuse without rudeness to her hostess."

"And so you made her ride with him yesterday? And so you hope to decoy her into an engagement with him?"



"No, no. I merely mean to *decoy* her—if you choose that word—into an intimacy, and then I will leave them to make out the rest between them. He is really irresistible! Stamford Smith's wife was over head and ears in love with him; and you know poor Ellen Livermore made no secret of her attachment to him."

"Why did she not marry him?"

"Lord knows," replied the lady, shrugging her shoulders. "She did not play her cards well; and I believe, the truth is, he has been a sad fellow."

"Do you believe there was any truth in that girl's story yesterday?"

"Very likely; pretty girls in her station are apt to go astray, you know. But here is Augusta. Come in, Mr. Sydney, there is no one here but us. Are you going so early?"

"Yes. After I shall have seen you to your carriage, I have no desire to stay." There was a slight movement behind the screen, but apparently not noticed by the parties outside. "Oh, Miss Emly, allow me," he said, dropping on his knee before Augusta, who, the dressing-maid not being at her post, was attempting to button her overshoe,—“allow me?"

"No, thank you; I always do these things for myself."

"But I insist."

"And I protest!" And Augusta Emly sprang behind the screen.

Sydney, with a sort of playful gallantry, followed her. Between them both the screen fell, and they all stood silent and aghast, as if the earth had opened before them. There still sat Fanny, beautiful as the most beautiful of Murillo's peasant-mothers. The fever had left her cheek—it was as colorless as marble; her lips were red, her eyes beaming



with a supernatural light, and her dark hair hung in matted masses of ringlets to her waist. She cast one bewildered glance around her, and then fixing her eyes on Sydney, she sprang to him and laid her hand on his arm, exclaiming, "Stafford! Stafford!" in a voice that vibrated on the ears of all those who heard her, long after it was silent for ever!

Mrs. Emly locked the door. Truly the children of this world *are* wise in their generation! Sydney disengaged his arm, and said, in a scarcely audible voice, for his false words choked him as he uttered them, "Who do you take me for? The woman is mad!"

"No—I am not mad yet—but oh, my head, it aches so! it is so giddy! Feel how it beats, Stafford. Oh, don't pull your hand away from me! How many times you have kissed these temples, and the curls that hung over them, and talked about their beauty. What are they now? What will they soon be? You feel it throb, don't you? Stafford, I am not going to blame you now. I have forgiven you; I have prayed to God to forgive you. Oh how deadly pale you are now, Stafford! Now you feel for us! Now, look at our poor little child!" She uncovered the poor little infant, and raised it more from stupor than from sleep. The half-famished little thing uttered a feeble, sickly moan. "Oh God! oh God—she is dying! Is not she dying?" She grasped Augusta Emly's arm. "Can't something be done for her? I have killed her! I have killed my baby! It was you that were kind to us yesterday—yes—it was you. I don't know where it was. Oh—my head—my head!"

"For God's sake, mamma, let us take her home with us," cried Augusta, and she rushed to the door to look for her servant. As she opened it, voices and footsteps were heard descending the stairs. She heeded them not,—her mother did,



"Go now—go instantly, Sydney," she said.

"Oh, no—no—do not go," cried Fanny, attempting to grasp him; but he eluded her, and unnoticed by them, passed through the throng of servants at the door, threw himself into the first hackney coach he saw, and was driven away.

Fanny uttered one piercing shriek, looked wildly around her, and passing through the cluster of ladies pressing into the cloak-room, she passed, unobserved by her, behind Miss Emly, who stood, regardless of the pouring rain, on the doorstep ordering her coachman to drive nearer the door. When she returned to the cloak-room, it was filled with ladies; and in the confusion of the shawling, there was much talk among them of the strange apparition that had glided out of the room as they entered.

Mrs. Emly threw a cloak around her daughter. "Say nothing, Augusta!" she whispered, imperatively, "they are both gone."

"Gone! together?"

Mrs. Emly did not, or affected not to hear her. The next morning Miss Emly was twice summoned to breakfast before she appeared. She had passed a sleepless and wretched night, thinking of that helpless young sufferer, ruined, and in her extreme misery, driven forth to the stormy elements.

There is not a sadder moment in life than that in which a young, hopeful, generous creature discovers unsoundness, worldliness, and heartlessness in those to whom nature has most closely bound her,—than that, when, in the freedom of her own purity and love of goodness, and faith in truth, she discovers the compromising selfishness, the sordid calculations, the conventional falsehood of the world. Happy for her, if, in misanthropic disgust, she does not turn away from it; happy, if



use does not bring her to stoop from her high position; most happy, if like Him who came to the sick, she fulfil her mission, and remain in the world, not of it!

Augusta went through the form of breakfast, and taking up the morning paper and passing her eye listlessly over it, her attention was fixed by the following paragraph:

*“Committals at the Tombs.”*—Fanny McDermot, a young woman so calling herself, was taken up by a watchman during the violence of the storm last night with a dead infant in her arms. A rich velvet mantilla, lined with fur, was wrapped round the child. Nothing but moans could be extracted from the woman. She was committed for stealing the mantilla. A jury of inquest is called to sit upon the child, which they have not yet been able to force from the mother’s arms.”

“Good Heavens, Augusta, what is the matter? Are you faint?” asked the mother.

Augusta shook her head, and rang the bell, while she gave Mrs. Emly the paragraph to read. “Daniel,” she said to the servant who answered the bell, “Go to Dr. Edmunds, and ask him to come to me immediately. Stop, Daniel—ask Gray as you go along to send me a carriage directly.”

“What now, Miss Emly? Are you going to the Tombs?”

“Yes.”

“Not with my permission.”

“Without it then, ma’am, unless you bolt the doors upon me. The doctor will go with me. There is no impropriety, and no Quixotism in my going, and I shall never be happy again if I do not go. Oh, my dear mother,” continued she, bursting into tears, “I have suffered agonies this night thinking of that poor young woman; but they are nothing—nothing to the misery of hearing you last night defend that bad man, and bring me reason upon reason why ‘it was to be expected,’



and 'what often happened,' and 'what no one thought of condemning a man for.' That he, loaded with God's good gifts, should make a prey and victim of a trusting, loving, defenceless woman; and she should be cast out of the pale of humanity—turned from our doors—driven forth to perish in the storm. Oh, it is monstrous!—monstrous!"

Augusta was too strong for her mother. She made no further opposition, but merely murmured, in a voice that did not reach her daughter's ear, "There does seem to be inconsistency, but it appears different when one knows the world!"

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The door of Fanny McDermot's cell was opened by the turnkey, and Miss Emly and the physician were admitted. It was a room twice the size of those allotted to single occupants, and there were already two women of the most hardened character in it, besides a young girl, not sixteen, committed for infanticide. She, her eyes filled with tears, was bathing Fanny's head with cold water, while the women, looking like two furies, were accusing one another of having stolen from Fanny, the one a handkerchief, the other a ring.

Fanny's dead infant was on her arm, while she, half raised on her elbow, bent over it. She had wrapped her cloak and the only blanket on the bed around it. "She is so cold," she said; "I have tried all night to warm her. She grows colder and colder."

"Cannot this young woman be moved to a more decent apartment?" asked Miss Emly of the turnkey.

Fanny looked up at the sound of her voice. "Oh, you have come—I thought you would," she said. "You will warm my baby, won't you."



"Yes, indeed I will. Let me take her."

"Take her away? No—I can't—I shall never see her again! They tried to pull her away from me, but they could not—we grew together! Bring me a little warm milk for her. She has not sucked since yesterday morning, and then my milk was so hot, I think it scalded her—I am sure it did not agree with her."

"Oh, pray," said Augusta, to the turnkey, who had replied to her inquiry, "that the next room was just vacated, and could be made quite comfortable, "pray procure a bed and blankets, and whatever will be of any use to her. I will pay you for all your expense and trouble."

"Nothing can be of use," said the physician," whose fingers were on Fanny's pulse; "her heart is fluttering with its last beats."

"Thank God!" murmured Augusta.

"Put your hand on her head. Did you ever feel such heat?"

"Oh dear, dear! it was that dreadful heat she spoke of in all her mental misery last night."

A quick step was heard along the passage; a sobbing voice addressed the turnkey, and in rushed Mrs. O'Rourke. She did not, as her people commonly do at the sight of a dying creature, set up a howl, but she sunk on her knees, and pressed her hand to her lips as if to hold in the words that were leaping from her heart.

Fanny looked at her for a moment in silence, then, with a faint smile on her quivering lips, she stretched her hand to her. "You have found me. I could not find you. I walked—and walked." She closed her eyes and sunk back on her pillow; her face became calmer, and when she again opened her eyes it was more quiet. "Mrs. O'Rourke," she said, quite



distinctly, directing her eyes to Augusta, "this lady believed me—tell her about me."

"Oh, I will—I will—I will."

"Hush—not now. Come here,—my baby is dead. I—God is good. I forgive—God is love. My baby—yes—God—is—good."

In that unfailing goodness the mother and the child repose for ever.

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THE END.

M. D.









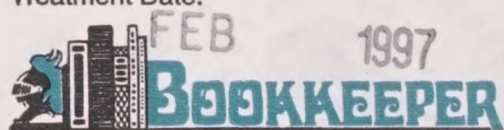








Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing Agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date:



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